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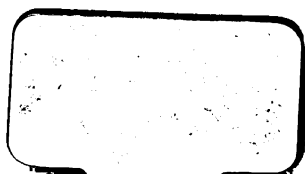
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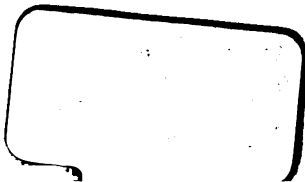


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POETIC MEDITATIONS.

POETIC MEDITATIONS,

BY

DORA MARY MATHER.

(LATE MISS DRAWBRIDGE)



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P R E F A C E.

THE following poems were written by the only daughter of the late Mr. Drawbridge of Wellingborough, in Northamptonshire.

They were nearly all composed by her while under the parental roof. At her decease, which occurred a few years after her marriage, they were left with her husband for the private use of himself and their children, or for publication, if deemed desirable by others, both as a memorial of her in her native town, and for general use.

Their real merit, in connection with their local interest, appear to me to favour the latter design ; especially as no other end is anticipated by it, than, "that for the gift bestowed upon *her*, by means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on *her* behalf." If the Poetry be not of the highest order, "it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

It is devoted to the beauties of nature ; to the endearments of social life, to the refinements of virtue to genuine devotion, and to a sound theological creed. It will gratify not a few to find, in the only child of one so eccentric, and consequently so little understood, so much evangelical purity, simplicity, and power. It speaks well for the household in which such a spirit was fostered and such a character was formed. Poems of this description are rare even amidst the vast and multifarious literature of the present day. They are well suited to the nursery, to the sick-chamber, to the country retreat, and to all occasions in which pleasure and profit are combined.

My attention having been casually directed to them, I readily consented to undertake the responsibility of recommending them to the notice of others.

GEORGE ROGERS.

Camberwell.

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POETIC MEDITATIONS.

OUR GARDEN.

I love our dear old garden,
With its ivy-covered walls,
And the fountain whose bright water
Ever murmuringly falls
Into the moss-grown basin,
Shaded o'er by graceful trees,
And the lilac and laburnum,
That wave in every breeze.

Then there's the giant oak-tree,
That for centuries has stood,
Bearing up the gentle ivy,
As one so noble should ;
And the swing now so neglected,
And the seat beneath the bough—
How many forms have rested there
That sleep their last sleep now !

The flowers in our garden
Are sweet and gay to view,
Wallflowers, pinks, and roses,
That bloom the summer through ;
Though some say they're old-fashioned,
They are like old friends to me,
Their bright familiar faces
I dearly love to see.

And in the dreary winter
Our garden still is bright,
With the laurel and the holly,
And firs of giant height :
And when the snow hangs on them—
We love to see it so,—
They stand like veterans hoary
Whose hearts are green below.

The rustic little arbour,
The chief charm of the place,
Is clustered o'er with woodbine,
Whose branches interlace
With those of rose and jasmine,
And drooping hide from view
The little oaken settle
Just large enough for two.

In the centre is the grass-plot,
With its beds of curious form,

And the row of thatched bee-hives,
Where the bees hum night and morn.
Though it boast no lawns and statues,
Or flowers rare and grand,
I would not change our garden
For any in the land !

THE SEASONS.

AN ACROSTIC.

S pring, we hail thy gentle reign,
P risoned flowers burst their chain ;
R ippling brooks, kept silent long
I n icy bands, resume their song ;
N ow bedewed with nature's tears,
G reen and fresh the earth appears.

S ummer rules with cloudless skies,
U nder foot the flowerets rise ;
M yriad songsters fill the trees,
M ingled sweets perfume the breeze ;
E ver bright are summer hours,
R ich with sunshine, fruit, and flowers.

A utumn comes with golden sheaves
U nto earth 'mid falling leaves ;
T rees, that late so emerald were,
U mber, red, and gold appear ;
M errily the reapers sing,
N ow the harvest home they bring.

POETIC MEDITATIONS.

W inter clothes the world in white,
I ce-bound floods attest his might ;
N ow the firelight brightly glows,
T hough without the wild wind blows ;
E 'en in winter charms we see,
R ough and cold though he may be !

BALMY SLEEP.

When day, with all its labour, ends,
And night her empire claims,
How softly balmy sleep descends
Upon our wearied frames.

On rich and poor, on small and great,
God doth this boon bestow,
It visits monarchs in their state,
And beggars in their woe.

It giveth to the weary rest,
And to the sick relief,
While mourning ones, by sorrow prest,
In sleep forget their grief.

Let sleep an emblem be to all
Of death, our last repose,
When in the grave our bodies shall
Find rest from earthly woes.

Why should believers fear and weep
When thinking on the tomb ?
God giveth His beloved sleep,
And takes their spirits home.

THE DECEASED BROTHER.

Along the narrow cottage stair
A pale young child is creeping ;
He seeks the little chamber where
His brother now lies sleeping :
The body sleeps in death's embrace,
A tranquil, dreamless slumber ;
The soul, we trust, has found a place
Among the ransomed number.

Now Willie, trembling, doth withdraw
The snowy cover gently ;
On that white face, with silent awe,
He gazes long—intently.
The moonlight shows the childish form
Once full of health and vigour,
Cut off like rose-bud in a storm,
By death's impartial rigour.

Hark ! the young mourner softly speaks,
By his dead brother kneeling,
While sobs break forth, and down his cheeks
The tears of grief are stealing :—

" 'Twas but a week ago that we
Were playing with each other,
And when we could not well agree,
I struck my only brother !

" He gently spake, but yet the sun
Went down upon my anger,
And, ere the morrow was begun,
He lay in feverish languor.
I saw poor Frank no more alive ;
Life's slender thread was riven ;
And Oh ! 'tis misery to survive,
With that blow unforgiven !"

Poor Willie ! none but God above
Can raise thy thoughts which languish ;
May He send down His pardoning love,
To calm thy woe and anguish.
Dear children, be forgiving, meek,
And gentle to each other ;
Think, ere you harshly act or speak,
Of Willie and his brother.

THE BLUEBELL AND THE FERN.

A FABLE.

Down in a mossy woodland nook,
Beside a little sparkling brook,
A solitary bluebell grew,
Concealed from the observer's view

By leaves of fern, so broad and green,
A canopy of state, I ween,
That o'er this forest flower was cast,
To shield from heat and stormy blast.

One morn the bluebell thus complained—

“I cannot bear to be restrained ;
I hate this awkward, ugly fern,
'Tis in my way where'er I turn ;
I want to vie with other flowers
That blossom in these woodland bowers !
For here my lovely form and hue
Are hidden from the admiring view.”

Thus spake the discontented flower ;
And lo ! within another hour
A botanist, who passed that way,
Plucked from the fern each branch and spray.
“Now,” sang the bluebell, “I am free,
And, oh, how happy I shall be !”
And brightly shone each azure bell,
As morning sunshine o'er it fell.

At noon the breezes sank to rest,
And sultry heat the air opprest ;
The sun his burning radiance shed
Upon the flower's defenceless head.
Ah ! now it missed the fern-leaves' shade,
Its beauty soon began to fade,
And ere the evening of the day,
Withered and dead the bluebell lay.

MORAL.

Now from the bluebell and the fern,
Dear children, this short lesson learn—
If parents keep you in restraint,
'Tis for your good—make no complaint ;
Their kind control shall guard and shield,
Then strict obedience ever yield,
Lest, like the flower, too late you prove
That all their care arose from love.

BLIND NELLIE.

When summer flowers deck the earth,
The fair-haired Nellie sits
Within her lowly cottage door,
And singeth as she knits.
The woodbine twines about the porch,
And up the white-washed walls,
While on her face, between the leaves,
The golden sunshine falls.

She listens to the thousand sounds
That float upon the breeze,
The insects hum, the wild bird's song,
The murmuring of the seas.
And oft amid her silken curls
Bright flow'rets she will bind ;
Their rainbow hues are lost on her,
For Nellie Gray is blind.

But though her eyes have ne'er beheld
Fair Nature's varied scene,
Sweet Nellie's darksome path through life
Has never lonely been.
Blest with a mother's fervent love,
And tender, guiding hand,
She meekly treads the narrow way
To reach the better land.

The glorious light of life divine
Illumes blind Nellie's heart ;
Lit and sustained by God alone,
Its beams shall ne'er depart :
They shed a radiance on the road
To heaven, that blessed place
Where she, with vision clear, shall gaze
Upon her Saviour's face !

WILD FLOWERS.

How lovely are the sweet wild flowers
That o'er the earth are spread,
That twine about the emerald bowers,
And spring where'er we tread.
Down in the forest's mossy nooks,
In lowliness they hide,
In rustic lanes, by sparkling brooks,
And on the green hill-side.

How brightly, like the richest gems,
They shine amidst the grass,
And gently bend their fragile stems,
As murmuring breezes pass !
From heated rooms and noisome lanes,
The city children come,
And each a fragrant bunch obtains,
To beautify his home.

Let every humble way-side flower,
That blossoms on the sod,
Teach us the wisdom, love, and power,
Of the Almighty God.
Each was created by His hand,
He gave them rich perfume,
And scattered them o'er all the land,
In loveliness to bloom.

And let us, when they fade away,
As e'en the fairest must,
Learn that we also shall decay,
And mingle with the dust.
God grant that then our souls may soar
To His blest home above,
To be with Him for evermore,
And sing the Saviour's love !

THE GIPSY BABY'S GRAVE.

In the forest's deep recesses,
Where dark shadows fall around,

Half-concealed by tangled brushwood,
Is a solitary mound.
Moss and grass grow thick upon it,
Over it the fern leaves wave,
While the fairest woodland flow'rets
Blossom on the forest grave.

Nothing can we find to tell us
Who in death is sleeping here ;
No sad mourner ever cometh
O'er this spot to shed a tear.
Monuments and cultured blossoms
Mark the tombs of good and brave,
But no human hand hath planted
E'en a flower on Annie's grave.

When the birds of spring were warbling
Sweetly round the gipsy's tent,
Baby Annie, like a sunbeam,
'Mid the outcast race was sent :
But when early autumn tempests
Through the woods did wildly rave,
Sadly laid they little Annie
In this lonely forest grave.

Now her tribe and gipsy parents
Wander in a distant land—
They in this deep-felt bereavement
See no loving Father's hand ;

For, alas ! they know not Jesus,
He who died their child to save—
And with bitter, hopeless feelings,
O'ft they think of Annie's grave.

Hark ! the angels sweetly singing,
Far beyond our azure dome ;
Annie's voice rings out in chorus ;
She hath found a blissful home.
Now her spirit dwells with Jesus,
Who for her a ransom gave,
Whilst her body for a season
Resteth in the forest grave.

THE VAIN PRIMROSE.

A FABLE.

On the emerald bank of a silvery pool,
Where the long willow boughs made it shady and cool,
There blossomed a primrose, so yellow and bright,
It shone like a star on a midsummer's night.
Around it wild daisies and buttercups grew,
The cuckoo-flower pale, and forget-me-not-blue,
While far on the water the white lilies lay—
All happy they lived through the bright summer day.

One morning the breezes bowed down the long grass,
And bent the sweet primrose, till, as in a glass,
She saw her fair face in the water so plain,
That the floweret became both conceited and vain.

"How splendid my shape and my colour !"^{*} she cried,
"Compared with the flowers that grow by my side ;
The great water-lilies, that yonder I see,
I'm sure would look frightful, if placed near to me.

"I must let them all know their inferior place,
Nor shall one mean insect alight on my face."
So above all the flowers she held her head high,
And when any spoke, she vouchsafed no reply.
When the wild-bee flew near at the close of the day,
To seek for her honey, she drove him away,
Exclaiming, "Dare *you* on my beauty encroach,
Which only the sun and the breeze may approach ?"

Thus apart from her kindred the vain primrose grew,
Till a great storm arose, and the wind fiercely blew ;
The flowers all nestled beneath the tall grass,
But the primrose bowed not, while the tempest should
pass !

"Ah, no !" she laughed forth, "I'm too lovely by far
For the rude storm to crush, or the cold rain to mar."
But just as she spoke, in vain-glorying pride,
The wind cut her stem, and unpitied she died.

MORAL.

The moral I think, little readers, is plain !
I hope that this flower, so foolishly vain,
Does not bear a likeness to any of you—
Remember its fate and be warned, if it do :

Examine God's Word ; may the lessons there taught
Of humility, home to each conscience be brought;
May God His good Spirit to each one impart,
That you may, like Jesus, be lowly in heart.

"GOD CAN SEE."

When autumn leaves were falling
O'er valley, hill and plain,
A childish group had gathered
In a quiet country lane.
As they shook the hedge-row branches,
Ripe nuts fell at their feet,
And from the neighbouring mountains,
Their laughter echoed sweet.

Ere long they reached the entrance
Of a large and shady wood,
Where clothed in gold and crimson,
The elms and beeches stood.
"Come down this mossy pathway,"
The elder children cried,
"For there are nuts in plenty
Within the forest wide."

But one among the number,
A little fair-haired child,
Drew back, nor dared to follow
Her playmates gay and wild.

She said—" Now I must leave you,
For ere I quitted home,
My mother dear forbade me
Within the wood to roam."

" Oh, Lucy !" cried the others,
" Indeed, you must not go ;
Your mother cannot see you,
And she will never know."
To this deceitful counsel
The child could not agree,
She pointed up to heaven,
And whispered—" God can see."

She left her wondering playmates,
Nor cast 'a look behind :
Dear children, let her conduct
Be ever borne in mind.
Jehovah never slumbers—
So, wherever you may be,
In the light or in the darkness,
Remember—" God can see."

THE ORPHANS' HYMN.

Our Father, Thou hast taken
Our parents both away,
Oh ! leave us not forsaken,
But listen while we pray.

From Thy bright throne above us
Thine ear in mercy bend,
We've none but Thee to love us,
Thou art our only Friend.

Though all around look coldly
Upon our woe and need,
Yet we approach Thee boldly—
Thy promises we plead.
Protector of the orphan !
God of the fatherless !
Do Thou our anguish soften,
And aid us in distress.

Be Thou our father—mother—
Our Friend Almighty be ;
Help us to love each other,
And bind our hearts to Thee.
Bless us with resignation
To this, our heavy loss,
And give sweet consolation
From Christ the Saviour's cross.

Upon life's stormy ocean
Our barks are cast adrift,
And now, with deep emotion,
Our hearts to Thee we lift.
O, Lord, we pray Thee, guide us
Unto the heavenly shore ;
We're safe with Thee beside us,
Though loud the tempest roar.

Oh ! may Thy Son, Christ Jesus,
His grace on us bestow,
And in His goodness ease us
Of this our load of woe.
'Tis through His blood and merit
Our parents are above,
May we their home inherit,
And sing with them His love !

THE DYING CHILD AND THE SNOWDROP.

Upon a cottage window-sill
A simple snowdrop grew,
The sun its bright and golden beams
Each morning o'er it threw.
They sparkled on the flower, and then
On something quite as fair—
The pale face of a dying child
Who meekly suffered there.

She nursed and watched the little flower
With love and care untold,
Since first its leaves, so fresh and green,
Shot upwards from the mould.
She marked its growth from day to day,
And saw the bud uncloze ;
To her 'twas dearer, lovelier far
Than any flower that grows.

One day the snowdrop's petals fair
Began to fade and die ;
The sick child gazed, and peaceful smiles
Lit up her languid eye.
" Mother," she said, " the blossom dies,
Like me 't will pass away,
But when, next spring, God calls it forth,
It will His voice obey.

" And, mother, when it shall again
In snow-white beauty bloom,
Then think upon your little child
Within the darksome tomb :
For He, the kind and gracious God,
Who bids the flowerets rise,
Will surely raise my body up,
To dwell beyond the skies."

That very day, at sunset hour,
Her spirit passed away,
Soared from its earthly tenement
To realms of endless day.
The snowdrop grows upon her grave,
Nor blossoms there in vain,
It whispers to the mother's heart—
" Thy child shall rise again."

WILLIE.

" Willie," said a loving mother,
" I have heard, with grief and pain,

•
That you choose for your companions
Those who take God's name in vain.
Shun them, Willie, they are wicked,
And would make you vile as they;
Most severe will be my anger
If my wish you disobey."

Willie strict obedience promised,
But, alas! when trial came,
All his resolution vanished—
Melted by temptation's flame.
"Will you come?" his playmates shouted,
Conscience whispered—"Do not go;"
Willie paused, then like a coward,
Answered, "Yes," instead of "No."

• • • • • •
Years have flown—in yonder dungeon,
See a wretched forger stands,
Young, but on his haggard features
Sin and shame have fixed their brands.
It is Willie—oh! how altered
Since his happy boyish years;
Hark! he speaks in tones of anguish,
While his eyes o'erflow with tears.

"Oh! my mother! how I grieved thee!
Mocked thy tears and thought it brave,
Brought thee, by my wicked conduct,
Broken-hearted to the grave.

Disobedience to thy counsels
Paved the way for deeper crime,
Step by step I've come to ruin—
Ruin in my youthful prime ! ”

Children, think of Willie's language,
“ *Step by Step*,” alas ! he fell ;
Disobedience in his childhood
Ended in a felon's cell.
May Jehovah give you wisdom
Each temptation to withstand :—
Yield to one, and others quickly
Follow like an armed band.

SONG OF THE SNOW-FLAKES.

We are coming swiftly down,
Over country, over town,
Making courts and alleys vile,
Lovely for a little while :
Covering meadow, hill, and dale,
With a white and beauteous veil ;
While o'er hedge and tree we throw
Light and feathery wreaths of snow.

We are coming from the sky,
Not alone to glad the eye ;
Our Creator bids us fall
Softly, thickly, like a pall,

Where the little flowerets rest,
Buried in the earth's dark breast ;
Warm they lie beneath the snow,
Till the spring-time breezes blow.

Little child, you laugh with glee,
As our fairy forms you see,
Dancing by the window pane,
Whirling round and round again.
Do not leave us yet we pray,
Turn not thoughtlessly away—
Learn a lesson, ere you go,
From the falling flakes of snow.

We are tiny, feeble things,
Small and light as insects' wings ;
Breathe on us and we are gone ;
Yet in falling one by one,
See what wonders we perform,
Clothing earth in garments warm,
Making, in a distant land,
Avalanches great and grand !

Child, your actions may appear
Nothing worth—yet persevere ;
Many flakes the valley fill,
Many rain drops make the rill ;
And the mightiest things on earth
Oft in little deeds have birth :
Actions, in themselves but small,
Make in time a mighty all !

"MY MOTHER'S DEAD."

My mother's dead ; to-day the grave
Received her shrouded corse ;
And now the sense of loneliness
Returns with double force.
The evening sunshine, as of yore,
Lights up our little room ;
But ah ! the sunshine of my life
Is shadowed by her tomb.

My mother's dead ; I miss her form
In its accustomed place ;
I long to hear her loving voice,
And see her gentle face.
How oft together we have viewed
The sunset glory bright !
But now it seems not half so fair,
For I'm alone to-night.

My mother's dead ; her Bible lies
Beside her old arm-chair,
Her needle-work upon the stand,
Just as she left it there.
Now I must read and work alone,
No mother by my side,
Alone must tread our favourite paths,
At quiet evening-tide.

My mother's dead ; sadly I watch
The deepening twilight fall,
And many long-forgotten things
My memory doth recall.
I think how oft my words and deeds
Gave that dear mother pain ;
I seem to see her grievéd face,
And tear-drops fall like rain.

My mother's dead ; and as I pray
That I may be forgiven,
I feel her death was but the door
That opened into heaven :
I know that far beyond the stars
Now glittering in the west,
My mother dear has found a home
Of perfect joy and rest.

THE CRIPPLE.

I lie within our attic room,
The long, long summer day—
A sick and helpless crippled boy,
Who cannot work or play.
Thro' th' open window I can hear
The city's busy din,
While by my side my mother toils,
Our daily bread to win.

I look upon her care-worn face,
And mark its pallid hue,
And then I wish, for her sweet sake,
That I could labour too.
I think of father long since dead,
Of happy days gone by,
Then turn away to hide my tears,
And gaze upon the sky.

No trees or flowerets I can see,
No landscape fair and green,
Only the houses, dark and tall,
And a space of sky between.
To me that space is lovelier far,
Than a picture rare could be ;
In every change that there appears,
A Father's hand I see.

Now it is blue, like some clear lake,
Then dark with angry storms,
Or flecked with white and golden clouds,
Of light fantastic forms.
There, when the night her curtain draws,
One star its vigil keeps,
So clear and bright, it brings to mind
The eye that never sleeps.

While gazing on the glittering orb,
I muse on love divine ;
I know that He who placed it there,
Is mother's God and mine !

For us, when rebels and undone,
He sent His Son to die—
He'll guard us here, then take us home
To dwell beyond the sky !

A FOREST RAMBLE.

Children, come and roam with me
Down the forest's green arcade ;
There in sultry noon we find
Quiet and refreshing shade.
Everything we see around
Shows the love and skill of God ;
From the sturdy giant oak
To the moss upon the sod.

Fragrance, like to incense sweet,
From the flowerets rises up ;
And the busy wild-bee finds
Honey in each painted cup.
In the shade-bestowing trees,
Merry lays by birds are sung ;
With their joyous notes they seem
To reprove each murmuring tongue.

Now the warblers fly to drink
From the quiet woodland stream ;
In its waters, deep and clear,
Darting fish, like silver, gleam :

In the green and velvet moss,
On each leaf and slender blade,
Thousand insects find a home—
Every one in wisdom made.

Everything that God hath formed,
Lives for some good purpose here ;
Deeper might we search, and find
Nothing useless in its sphere.
Children, then a lesson learn,
Try how useful *you* can be ;
See you are not put to shame
By the flower, the brook, the tree.

Autumn soon will paint the trees
With the tints of gold and red ;
Soon these emerald leaves shall lie
On the pathway brown and dead.
As you see them fade and fall,
Recollect that you must die ;
Only by belief in Christ
Can you live again on high.

THE DISCONTENTED ROBIN.

A FABLE.

A robin sat amid leafy trees,
Where sunbeams bright and the summer breeze
Played on his wings and his scarlet breast,
Yet he heeded them not, but, with heart opprest,

He murmured—"I hate these branches green,
And long for a change of life and scene ;
If I had my way, through the world I'd roam,
For I find no pleasure or joy at home."

"My little child," said the mother bird,
"Your repining speech I have overheard ;
You wish for a change—you may if you will,
Visit the city beyond the hill ;
You will easily reach it within an hour,
And a robin, who lives in the minster tower,
Will receive you, and show you the city fair ;—
Go, and try to be happy there."

The robin, delighted with something new,
Chirped a merry "good-bye," and away he flew.
"Return when you're weary," the mother cried ;
"I shall never be weary," her son replied.
But scarce had a fortnight past away,
Ere the birdie returned in the twilight grey ;
His feathers were black with the city smoke,
He seemed unhappy, and thus he spoke :—

"Mother, I'm tired of city life,
Of the crowded streets, and the noise and strife ;
I enjoyed it at first, for the scene was new,
But soon the hubbub, distasteful grew ;
I've seen all the sights, and now I come,
Weary and sad, to my country home ;
I'm unhappy there, I'm unhappy here,
What *can* be the reason, mother dear ?"

Now list to the mother's answering words,
They are suited to children as well as birds ;—
“ My child, you sit idle all day long,
'Tis seldom you warble a cheerful song ;
Be busy and useful, and you will find
That industry bringeth a cheerful mind ;
Let the centre of happiness be in home,
And you'll never wish through the world to roam.”

THE FISHER'S COTTAGE.

Among the rocks, beside the sea,
The fisher's cottage stands ;
Far down below, the ocean waves
Break on the yellow sands.
'Tis pleasant when, in summer time,
The sea so tranquil lies,
Reflecting on its bosom fair
The azure, cloudless skies.

But now upon a winter's night,
How altered is the scene !
Around the cot the stormy winds
Are blowing cold and keen.
From cloudy skies the rain descends,
The billows roar and foam ;
While, tempest-tossed, the fisher's boat
Is far away from home.

Let us in fancy take a peep
Within the humble room,
Whose lamp a ray of brightness sends
Athwart the outer gloom.
Around their anxious mother's knees
The trembling children crowd ;
While she, to calm herself and them,
Reads from the Book aloud.

She reads of those poor fishermen
Who knew and served the Lord ;
Of Him who stilled the angry waves
By His almighty word.
And then she prays that God, who holds
The waters in His hand,
Would save her husband from the storm,
And bring him safe to land.

• • • • •

The storm has ceased—within that cot
A morning prayer is heard
From joyful hearts, for in the midst
The husband's form appeared.
That lowly home is happier far
Than many a palace fair,
It is the dwelling-place of Love,
The home of Faith and Prayer !

EARLY VIOLETS.

The winds of spring are blowing
Through garden, field, and brake,
And from their winter's slumber
They bid the flowers awake.
The buttercups and daisies
Spring up beneath our feet,
And, best of all, the violets
Unfold their blossoms sweet.

Not in our gardens only,
In fields and woods they bloom,
And close beside the highway
Send forth their rich perfume.
Now bands of merry children
In triumph homeward bring
The white and purple flowerets—
The fairest of the spring.

'Twas such a group that entered,
One lovely spring-time day,
A close and darkened chamber
Where a dying playmate lay.
"Dear Amy," said the eldest,
As beside her bed they stood,
"We have brought a bunch of violets
For you from Thornly Wood."

The sick girl took the blossoms
In her hands so thin and weak,
While her pallid face grew radiant
With the thanks she scarce could speak.
To her those early violets
Were the sweetest ever known,
And sweeter was the kindness
By her companions shown.

Those flowers awoke bright memories
Of woodland, field and lane,
Which she in health had trodden,
But would never tread again.
Yet Amy did not murmur
Against her Father's will,
For Jesus to her spirit
Had whispered—"Peace, be still."

Next morning, when the sunbeams
Drove the shades of night away,
Upon a lifeless bosom
The faded violets lay.
Dear Amy's ransomed spirit
Through grace had found a home,
Where flowerets never wither—
Where sorrow cannot come.

SUMMER SUNSHINE.

How brilliant are the sunbeams
That sparkle everywhere—

And fill with warmth and brightness,
The fragrant summer air !
See how they gild with splendour
The windows of the hall ;
Then dance among the vine leaves
Upon the cottage wall !

Amid the forest verdure,
They play at hide-and-seek ;
And lie upon the green sward,
In many a golden streak.
The flowers unfold their petals,
To catch the sunny gleams ;
And swarms of merry insects
Sport lightly in the beams.

Into the busy city
They struggle here and there,
And gild the dingy alley,
Or dusty thoroughfare !
And many a city sempstress
Regrets her country home,
When through her narrow window,
The summer sunbeams come.

This bright and golden sunshine
Must quickly pass away ;
It pales before the tempest,
Or twilight shadows gray.

Dear children, would you ever
Have sunlight in your homes ?
Then think with angry passions
A shadow always comes :

But a loving, cheerful temper,
A gentle, smiling face,
Will cast a ray of brightness
Within the darkest place :
Words, looks, and deeds of kindness,
Are sunbeams bright and fair ;
God help you, little children,
To shed them everywhere.

A SONG ABOUT MOSSES.

Dear children, have you ever thought
What use the moss can be,
That lies, like velvet, green and soft
On rock, and wall, and tree ?
Though but a little creeping plant.
It has a work to do—
Jehovah has created it
For use and beauty too,

The insect tribes in mosses find
Their lodging and their food,
And refuge in the winter time,
From cold and tempest rude :

They spread upon the forest path,
A carpet soft and fine,
Where overhead the giant-trees
Their leafy boughs entwine.

They creep on mouldering castle walls,
And over tombstones grey,
Weaving a mantle fair and green
O'er ruin and decay.
They spring where nothing else will grow,
In places bleak and bare,
And there for grasses, shrubs, and trees,
A soil they oft prepare.

They overspread the roots of trees,
And up the trunks they climb,
Protecting them from winter's frost,
And heat in summer time.
They shield them from decay through damp,
But keep them moist in drought ;
Nor are these all the useful deeds
By little mosses wrought.

For through the new world's forests deep
The traveller they guide,
Because they chiefly clothe the trees
Upon the northern side.
In Lapland's cold and dreary clime
Beds are of mosses made—
In leathern cradles, lined with moss,
There little babes are laid.

To everything its Maker hath
A place and use assigned ;
And if we closely search the moss
What proofs of skill we find !
Each perfect, tiny part proclaims
The wisdom of the Lord,
And bears the impress of the Hand
That stretched the heavens abroad.

THE FIRE-LIT ROOM.

The early winter twilight
Proclaimed the day's decline ;
Like stars, within the city,
The lamps began to shine.
Homeward from school returning ;
By houses large and grand,
A brother and a sister
Were passing hand in hand.

At length they reached a mansion,
Where the lower windows glowed
With a firelight whose brilliance
Shone far across the road.
A glimpse of merry children,
That clustered round the hearth,
Caused Mary and her brother
To linger on the path.

" Oh, Willie," whispered Mary,
" See the pictures on the walls,
And the children's happy faces,
Whereon the firelight falls!
Ah ! they are rich and gladsome,
From every trouble free ;
If we were they, dear brother,
How happy we should be !

" But see," she quickly added,
" One little girl in tears !
Apart from all the others,
How angry she appears.
And now her little brother
Seems urging her to play,
But, Willie, look how crossly
She pushes him away."

Still Mary would have lingered,
But Willie bade her come ;
" 'Tis rude," he said, " to watch them,
And we must hasten home."
That night they told their mother
About the mansion fair,
And marvelled that an inmate
Could be unhappy there.

She answered — " Wealth and grandeur
No happiness impart,
When angry, wicked feelings
Are raging in the heart ;

Love, peace, and true contentment,
Make glad the poorest cot ;
And a palace home, without them,
Would be a gloomy spot."

WELCOME TO THE SNOWDROPS.

Welcome to the snowdrops !
Their praises we will sing,
The gift of dying winter,
The heralds of the spring !
They boast no gorgeous colours,
No fragrance they possess :
Yet, with united voices,
Their beauty we confess.

Welcome to the snowdrop !
Their silver bells unfold,
Before the warmth of spring-time
Hath banished winter's cold.
Ere yet the emerald verdure
Bedecks the garden bowers,
They spring up in the borders,
The first born of the flowers !

" Welcome to the snowdrops !"
The merry children cry,
As in their little gardens
The blossoms they espy.

They tell us that the winter
Has nearly passed away ;
That soon the golden sunshine
Will woo us out to play.

Welcome to the snowdrops !
For when they come again,
We know the yellow crocus
Will follow in their train.
Ere long, beneath the hedge-rows,
The violets will peep ;
And primroses and cowslips
Awake from winter's sleep !

Welcome to the snowdrops !
On many a grave they bloom ;
And as we see them rising
From out the earth's deep gloom,
How plainly they remind us
That all who sleep below
Must rise, when God shall bid them,
And live in weal or woe.

LITTLE THINGS USEFUL.

What use can there be for the bird so small,
Trilling his song on the garden wall ?
Under its shadow a child sits down—
 • brow is dark with a gloomy frown ;

But she listens, and says, as she checks a sigh,
"The bird is merry, and why not I?"
Her face grows brighter, and hark! ere long,
The little one joins in the birdie's song!

What use for the violets blue, that peep
Under the hedge on the bank so steep?
A girl is passing, and soon her eyes
Spy out the flowers, and softly she cries—
"The first I have found! Though high they grow,
Blind Charlie must have them, he loves them so;"
And the fragrant blossoms bring smiles of joy
To the pallid face of the sightless boy.

What use for the twig that is ready to fall,
Brown and dead, from the elm-tree tall?
See, as it waves in the balmy breeze,
A rook comes flying among the trees;
He pauses awhile on a bough to sway,
Then flies, with the twig in his beak, away;
For his nest in the rookery's green retreat
Without that twig would be incomplete.

What use for the raindrops, that, one by one
Have filled the hollow of yonder stone?
A thirsty traveller passes by,
Looking in vain for a brooklet nigh;
But the noonday sunbeams have not dried up
The sparkling drops in that stony cup—
So he quenches his thirst with the welcome rain,
Then starts refreshed on his journey again.

“What use for us?” do the children ask?
Oh! is there not many a loving task,
That ye may perform in your home’s bright sphere,
For brother, or sister, or parent dear?
By acts of obedience, words of love,
And gentle behaviour, ye may prove
That children indeed are the beautiful flowers,
That brighten and gladden our household bowers!

THE WILD-ROSE AND THE CLOUD.

A FABLE.

Upon a hedge-row wayside,
A little rose-bud fair
Unclosed its silken petals
To meet the morning air.
The fragrant zephyrs whispered
To the flower newly born;
And the sunbeams played around it,
All through that summer morn.

But when the glowing noon-tide
Had fairly past away,
A dark cloud gathered slowly,
And hid the orb of day.
“Alas! what means this dulness?”
The rose complained aloud;
“I would ’twere always sunshine,
Without a single cloud.”

A noble oak-tree flourished,
The hedge-row bower beside ;
He heard the flow'ret murmur,
And quickly he replied—
“ Oh, foolish little wild-rose,
I fear that you and I,
If we had sunshine always,
Would quickly droop and die.
“ These clouds, so dark and gloomy,
Distil refreshing showers,
That give new strength and beauty
To herbs, and trees, and flowers.”
Just then, as if confirming
The words so kind and wise,
A shower, fresh and sparkling,
Fell softly from the skies.
But when the rain was over,
The sun shone out once more,
And the wild-rose, gemmed with pearl-drops,
Looked fairer than before.
And it whispered to the oak-tree—
“ Oh, let me join with you
In praising our Creator
For cloud and sunshine too.”

MORAL.

In daily life, dear children,
We meet with cloud and shine ;
In wisdom God has willed it,
Then let us not repine.

But may each cloud of sorrow,
That gathers o'er us here,
Send down a shower to bless us,
To strengthen and to cheer.

THE HUMP-BACKED GIRL.

The little cripple passed along
The quiet village street ;
The clothes she wore were patched and old,
Yet ever clean and neat.
Though she was sickly and deformed,
Her face was sweetly fair ;
And the glossy curls around her brow
Proclaimed a mother's care.
Soon she went by the village school,
As, from the open door,
A train of boys came shouting forth,
Glad that their tasks were o'er ;
A few, more boisterous than the rest,
Themselves erect and strong,
Began to mock the hump-backed girl,
Who quickly walked along.
Once, Jenny uttered sharp retorts,
When jests like theirs she heard ;
But now that grace had changed her heart,
She answered not a word.
Only the blush that dyed her cheek,
And the tear that down it stole,
Showed that the coarse unfeeling taunts
Had sunk into her soul.

Arrived at home, poor Jenny sought
Her chamber small and bare—
Methinks those thoughtless lads had wept
If they had seen her there :
Beside her lowly bed she knelt,
And sent this prayer to heaven,—
“ Oh, Father, help me to forgive,
As I have been forgiven.”

Dear children, 'tis from God above
Health, strength, and beauty come,
And He, in wisdom, has withheld
These precious gifts from some ;
Be kind to such, and learn to keep
The golden rule in view,
Nor ever let a cripple hear
A cruel taunt from you.

WINTER EVENINGS.

The brilliant flush of autumn
Has died on hill and plain ;
All nature now seems sleeping
Beneath stern winter's reign.
The frost is on the windows,
The robin seeks our door,
And lengthy winter evenings
Have come to us once more.

What gloomy winter evenings ;
When rain is pouring down,
And storm-kings hold their revels
In country and in town.
When wild winds shake the casements
In mad and boisterous glee,
What frequent prayer is offered
For dear ones far at sea !

What lovely winter evenings !
When the full moon at night—
Sheds softly from the heavens
A flood of silvery light—
When the stars above are shining,
And all the earth below
Is covered with a mantle
Of sparkling frost and snow.

What dreary winter evenings !
To the very, very poor,
For poverty in winter
Is hardest to endure.
'Tis sad to watch the snow-flakes
Careering through the air,
When the fire-grate is empty,
And cupboard shelves are bare !

What "cheery winter evenings !"
The little ones exclaim,
While gathering with their parents,
Around the glowing flame.

Oh ! happy are the households
That round the fire can meet,
Upon these winter evenings,
In union complete.

“ I DARE NOT.”

A group of boys, from school set free,
Gathered to slide with noisy glee,
One of their band they urged in vain
To venture on the frozen plain ;
“ No,” Harry said, “ I cannot come,
For father bade me hasten home ;
His word I dare not disobey,
And cannot stop with you to-day.”

But they exclaimed, “ You must not go !
Stay, stay ! your father need not know ;
Tell him, because you broke a rule
You were imprisoned after school.”
But Harry left them all behind,
And on its wings the wintry wind
Bore to their ears his brave reply—
“ You know I dare not tell a lie.”

This band of boys, one rainy day.
Had met at Frederick's home to play ;
The old farm-house they roamed around,
And soon a locked-up door they found ;
“ Peep through the crack,” their young host said ;
Each boy in turn bent down his head,
And saw within a golden store
Of apples piled upon the floor.

Then whispered Fred—" I'll find the key ;
Father is out ; what fun 'twill be ! "
But Harry, as Fred ran away,
Cried—" It is wrong, I will not stay ! "
Then all the lads remonstrance made—
" Coward ! why not ? you are afraid ! "
" Yes," he replied, and turned to leave—
" I am afraid, I dare not thief ! "

Dear little ones, who read this song,
If you are tempted to do wrong,
May God assist you from on high
To make " I dare not ! " your reply.
Ere long I hope to speak to you
Of things that Harry dared to do,
And prove to all that he possess'd
True bravery within his breast.

" I DARE."

Dear little ones, once more we meet ;
Brave Harry yet again we greet ;
He with a friend, up hill and down,
Was hastening from a neighbouring town ;
There, with a message, they had been—
'Twas late, and darkness veiled the scene ;
Ere long a narrow lane they neared,
And Jamie full of dread appeared.

" Dare you," he whispered in affright,
" Pass through the haunted lane at night ? "
" Surely I dare ! this shorter way
Is quite as safe by night as day.

I fear no ghosts!—so, Jamie, come,
They are expecting us at home.”
Then both went on, and ne’er again
Did Jamie dread the haunted lane.

Before the bell to school should call
Some lads had met to play at ball ;
But soon from Harry’s hand, alas !
The ball flew through a pane of glass.
Then cried the others in dismay—
“ Come, Harry, quick ; we’ll run away,
“ No, no !” exclaimed the noble youth ;
“ I’ll stay, and dare to tell the truth !”

A house was burning ; sad to say,
A babe within it sleeping lay !
“ Save it—who dares ? ” the people cried—
“ I dare !” a boyish voice replied.
Through smoke and flame young Harry press’d,
And clasped the infant to his breast.
Oh ! how the crowd rejoiced and cheered,
When scorched, but safe, they both appeared !

Thus Harry was no coward lad—
True courage in his heart he had.
Children, may you, like him, be led
To do the right—the wrong to dread.
It may need bravery more rare
To say, “ I dare not !” than “ I dare !”
And very much of wisdom lies
In rightly using these replies.

THE OPEN DOOR.

FOUNDED ON A STORY IN "THE BRITISH MESSENGER."

Within a town of Holland once
A widow dwelt, 'tis said,
So poor, alas ! her children asked
One night, in vain, for bread.
Now this poor woman loved the Lord,
And knew that He was good,
So, with her little ones around,
She prayed to Him for food.

When prayer was done, her eldest child,
A boy of eight years old,
Said softly—"In the holy Book,
Dear mother, we are told
How God, with food by ravens brought,
Supplied His prophet's need ;"
"Yes," answered she, "but that, my son,
Was long ago, indeed."

"But, mother, God may do again
What He has done before,
And so, to let the birds fly in,
I will unclothe the door."
Then little Dirk, in simple faith,
Threw ope the door full wide,
That the radiance of the lamp
Fell on the path outside.

Ere long the burgomaster * passed,
And noticing the light,
Paused to enquire why the door
Was open late at night.
“ My little Dirk has done it, sir,”
The widow, smiling, said,
“ That ravens might fly in to bring
My hungry children bread.”
“ Indeed ! ” the burgomaster cried,
“ Then here’s a raven, lad ;
Come to my home, and you shall see
Where bread may soon be had.”
Along the streets to his own house
He quickly led the boy,
And sent him back with food that filled
The humble home with joy.
The supper ended, little Dirk
Went to the open door,
Looked up, said—“ Many thanks, good Lord ; ”
Then made it fast once more.
For though no birds had entered in,
He knew that God on high
Had hearkened to his mother’s prayer,
And sent this full supply.

SONG OF THE RAIN-DROPS.

Oh ! merrily in the spring-time we fall in sparkling
showers,
Upon the buds and blossoms just opening in the bowers,

* The burgomaster is the first magistrate of a Dutch town or village.

On the summer leaves we patter with a soft, refreshing
sound,
And gladly we are welcomed by the hot and thirsty
ground.

Sometimes we come with thunder, and with the lightning
flash,

And then against the windows how angrily we dash !
The children watch us rolling in streams along the
streets,

A thousand bubbles bearing, like tiny sailing fleets.

At other times descending when the sun is shining
bright,

The rainbow spans the heavens—a glad and glorious
sight ;

For this is God's fair token whereby the world is told
That He no more shall flood it as once He did of old.

And in the winter season, when gloom the sky enshrouds,
We fall, almost in silence, from the dull and pall-like
clouds

'Tis dreary in the country—'tis dreary in the town,
When all the day in winter we steadily come down.

Many a little sickly child, as on his bed he lies,
Can watch us through his casement descending from the
skies ;

And smiles of childish pleasure o'er his pallid features
pass,

As he marks us gently*trickling adown the window
glass.

But other little children will see us coming down,
And their rosy faces darken with many an angry frown:
And some perhaps will murmur—" These rainy days I
hate—

Oh ! for nice frosty weather that we may slide and
skate !"

Oh ! thoughtless children, who are loudly murmuring
thus,

Remember how Jehovah ruleth over us ;
Each rain-drop is fulfilling His wise and gracious plan ;
The earth must be well-watered to bring forth food for
man.

Complain not, but be thankful, for your bright and
happy home,

Where cold is scarcely heeded, and rain-drops cannot
come ;

Some dwell in wretched attics where thro' the roof we
fall.

And, alas ! how many others possess no homes at all !

A HAPPY NEW-YEAR.

A Happy New-Year ! little readers,
The old year has vanished for aye,
Though truly it seemeth but lately
We welcomed its opening day.
How swiftly and often unheeded
Its minutes and hours flew by !
As we think of the many we wasted,
Oh ! have we not reason to sigh ?

If we cast a glance backward, this morning,
We shall see that the path we have trod
Has been marked with unnumbered rich mercies,
Bestowed by the good hand of God.
Then let us draw near to His footstool,
And humbly with gratitude bow,
As we ask Him to bless and preserve us
In the year we are entering now.

Some child may bend over these pages,
And whisper, with countenance sad—
“ Ah ! last New-Year’s-Day I was happy,
But now it is hard to be glad.
One voice that then tenderly blessed me,
And wished me “ A Happy New-year,”
Is silent in death, and its accents
No more in our home we shall hear.”

Ah, yes ! in the year that is ended
Stern Death has been busy each day ;
How many a home he has entered,
And taken some loved one away !
And still does the Reaper continue
To cut down the corn and the flowers ;
More places next year will be vacant,
Among them perhaps may be *ours*.

A Happy New-Year ! oh, remember !
As the greeting is uttered around,
That only through Christ the Redeemer
True happiness e’er can be found !

And if we possess this rich treasure—
If God give us grace from on high—
We shall in the year now before us
Be ready to live or to die.

THE DYING GIRL'S WELCOME TO THE SPRING.

The winter is past, and the Spring so fair
Has come with her garland of pride,
And my mother has drawn, with loving care,
My couch to the window aside.
I can watch the rooks as they busily fly
In and out the elm-trees tall,
And see the lambs in the field close by,
With the clear blue sky over all.

In the garden beneath my window grows,
Amid cluster of lilac trees,
I can see the buds on the slender boughs
That danced in the sweet scented breeze.
They seem to call, as they tap on the pane,
“Come out from your shadowy room!”
But I know that I shall never leave it again
Till I'm borne away to the tomb.

My village companions often will come,
And will sit for awhile with me,
And they tell me how they merrily roam
Together o'er woodland and lea.
They give me Spring flowers of delicate hue,
That bloomed in some favourite nook,
And sprays—with the leaves just budding thro',
From the hawthorn close by the brook.

They say how soon from the mossy dell
Some violets they will bring ;
I know the beautiful spot right well—
I gathered them there last Spring.
But the memory does not make me grieve,
For when my visitors kind
Depart from my chamber, they seem to leave
The fragrance of Spring behind.
Yes, Spring is with us, and ah ! I ween
That ere it has past away,
In the graveyard yonder the grass so green
Will wave o'er my lifeless clay.
But, thanks to God, I've a hope through grace
That my spirit at death will soar,
To dwell in heaven, that glorious place,
With Jesus for evermore !

A SONG ABOUT DEW-DROPS.

In the summer morning fair,
Dew-drops glitter everywhere ;
How they sparkle as we pass,
On the emerald meadow grass !
From the wind-stirred hedge-row bowers
Oft they fall in silvery showers ;
And within the flowers' bright bells,
Hide they as in secret cells.
Do you wonder whence they are ?
Yonder sun that shines afar,
Following Jehovah's laws,
From the earth the moisture draws,

And when night begins her reign
It descends to earth again,
Like a vapour soft and still,
Over forest, vale, and hill.

When the long, long summer day,
Warm and dry, has passed away,
Trees, and plants, and blossoms bright,
Gladly drink the dew at night.
It is God, the Only Wise,
Thus the thirsty earth supplies
With the dew-drops pure and free,
Oh ! how great, how good is He !

These bright dew-drops bring to mind
Stories we in Scripture find ;
Here we read of manna white
Falling with the dew at night ;
And how once a fleece was made,
Wet or dry, as Gideon prayed ;
Children, find and read again
In the Book these records plain.

But ere long the sun will chase
All these tears from nature's face ;
Soon upon the meadows green
Not a dew-drop will be seen.
Youth is transient like the dew,
Children, soon 'twill pass from you ;
May Jehovah make you wise
To improve it as it flies !

THE FOREST BROOK.

Far down in the breezy forest,
Where the rays of sunshine gleam,
Through the green and quivering leaflets,
Shade and coolness reign supreme.

There sweet wild-flowers yield their fragrance,
Blooming in each mossy nook,
While with low and constant murmur,
Flows the sparkling forest brook.

Deep and clear the silvery streamlet
Glides along through light and shade,
Chiming o'er the glittering pebbles,
Falling in a bright cascade.

Shining fish dart through the water,
Undismayed by the line and hook,
While the graceful weeping willow
Droops to kiss the forest brook.

Emerald grass and velvet mosses
Clothe its flower-embroidered banks,
Butterflies are resting lightly
On the tall fern's stately ranks ;—

Bees are busy murmuring around us,
As we sit and upward look
To the sky and waving branches,
Far above the forest brook.

Thousand birds, with tuneful voices,
Singing in the leafy trees,
Make sweet music in the wild wood,
Borne along on every breeze.

Let us raise to God our praises,—
Trace His skill in nature's book,
In the trees, and plants, and flow'rets,
In the sparkling forest brook!

THE COOL OF THE DAY.

The sun has gone down in crimson and gold,
The sweet evening flowers their petals unfold;
The still dews are falling on earth's heated breast,
And myriad songsters are gone to their rest:—
Save the nightingale, warbling her beautiful lay—
Her full song of praise in the cool of the day.

From yon rustic hamlet the peasant girl's song
Is borne on the wandering breezes along;
The sheep-bell's low tingle is heard o'er the hill,
And nearer is chiming the sparkling rill;
Bees, laden with sweetness, are making their way
To their far-distant hives in the cool of the day.

As under the shadow of green boughs we rest,
And watch the rich light fade away in the west,
We feel the cool kiss of the odorous breeze,
As it ripples the grass and rustles the trees,
And hear the clear voices of children at play,
In the meadows and woods in the cool of the day.

When the bright glow of sunset has gone from the sky,
The moon's silver crescent has risen on high,
And casts a pale radiance o'er hill, vale, and stream,
While stars here and there in the firmament gleam :
The woodlands grow dark, with the shadows so gray,
And quiet night follows the cool of the day.

BLOSSOMS AND FRUIT.

FOUNDED ON A STORY IN "THE CHRISTIAN CABINET."

"Father!" in spring, young Hattie cried,
"When sunny summer comes,
This tree, so full of blossom now,
Will be weighed down with plums."
"We cannot tell," her father said,
"There may be very few ;
Sometimes much bloom brings little fruit—"
And Hattie found it true.

For winds and blight destroyed the plums,
And many proved unsound ;
'Twas sad to see the fallen ones
Lie withering on the ground.
When Hattie and her father stood
In fruit-time by the tree,
They, on the boughs once white with bloom,
Few ripe plums now could see.

"Dear Hattie," then the father said,
"This tree is much like you :
You smile—but listen while I show
It is a figure true.

Think of last Saturday—you talked
Of working hard that day ;
But very little you had done
When it had passed away.

“ In all your lessons you excelled
At first, but, ah ! I find
My Hattie in her studies now
Is very far behind.

And then the promises you make—
I fear without much thought—
I grieve to see how few are kept,
How many come to nought.

“ In all these things we surely find
Much blossom, little fruit ;
Do you not now perceive, my child,
The emblem well will suit ? ”

Poor Hattie felt the kind reproof,
Administered in love :—
Dear children, if her fault be yours,
May you, like her, improve.

WINTER IS HERE.

Winter is here ; for the summer flowers
Are sleeping under the ground,
And now by the frost-king's icy powers
The rivers are captive bound.
Around our door, with twittering note,
The dear little robin comes,
In his scarlet vest and his soft brown coat,
To pick up the scattered crumbs.

Winter is here, with its beautiful morns,
So sparkling, cold, and clear,
When a delicate veil of frost adorns
The scenery far and near.
And its evenings long, when the cheery fire
Sheds radiance through the room ;
But alas ! for the homes where poverty dire
Has shrouded the earth in gloom.

Winter is here, with its starry nights,
When the moon like an empress reigns ;
And sportive frost with his pencil writes,
And draws on the window-panes.
And ah ! it is here with its storms that roll
In fury o'er sea and land ;
But all are under the Lord's control,
And ruled by His mighty hand.

" Winter is here," an old man said,
To the children around his knee ;
And then he added, but not with dread,
" It may be the last for me.
For white as the snow my hair has grown,
Death soon will usher me in
To the land where winter is all unknown,
And sorrow, and death, and sin.

" It may be, darlings, you will not stay
The winter of life to know,
For many in youth are called away,
And laid in the grave-yard low.

O that the grace of God be given !
That, loving and trusting His Son,
You all may enter the joys of heaven,
Whenever this life is done."

" KEEP THE DOOR OF MY LIPS."

PSALM CXII. 3.

'Twas thus the ancient Psalmist
The God of heaven address'd ;
What need have we, dear children,
To breathe the same request !
For every day much evil
Escapes this portal through ;
Nor can we tell the mischief
That one wrong word may do.

Speech unkind and thoughtless
Will often pass the lips,
Or fretful, angry language
Across the threshold slips.
And oh ! beware of falsehoods—
If one goes through the door,
'Tis very often followed—
By many, many more.

Alas ! how much we utter
That we would fain recall ;
While words that should be spoken
Are oft not said at all.

Since thus it is, God help us
His grace divine to seek,
To keep us for this portal,
To teach us how to speak.

Ah ! there was One, dear children,
Who trod this earthly ground,
And in His mouth no evil,
Or guile was ever found.
'Twas Jesus, the Redeemer,
The ever blessed Lord,
Whose words of grace and wisdom
In Holy Writ are stored.

Oh, that the Saviour's spirit
May unto us be given ;
To rule our hearts and conduct,
And lead us on to heaven.
Then we when life is over,
To God's own presence brought,
Shall sin no more for ever,
In action, word, or thought !

BEYOND THE GARDEN-GATE.

FOUNDED ON A STORY IN THE "CHRISTIAN WORLD."

By the gate of the garden, near the wood,
A brother and sister together stood ;
" Beyond the gate you are not to roam,"
Their mother had said, as she quitted home ;

But tired of playing within the bound,
Frank opened the gate, and they looked around ;
" Oh, Jessie," he cried, " how I long to go,
To play for awhile in the wood below ! "

" But, Frankie, what did our mother say ? "
Said the little one, tempted to go astray ;
" She thought in the wood we might get harmed,"
Said Frank, " But we need not feel alarmed ;
There is nothing to hurt us, and oh ! just see
That beautiful squirrel on yonder tree ! "
And away ran Frank to the green retreat,
While Jessie followed with flying feet.

They chased the squirrel with laugh and shout,
They gathered the flowers and played about,
And then, as they feared it was getting late,
Returned unhurt to the garden-gate.
No questions were asked, and nobody knew
What Frank and Jessie had dared to do ;
Till on Saturday night, as they sat alone,
Frank to his mother the truth made known.

" But mother," he said, " though we went in the wood,
We got no harm, as you thought we should ;
Into the water we did not fall,
Nor did we injure our clothes at all."
" My son," was the answer, " it may be so,
Yet something you lost in the wood, I know ;
Think well, and then tell me," the mother said,
As she laid her hand on Frankie's head.

"My knife, my ball, and my pence," thought he,
"I have them all safe, then what could it be?
I know," at length he said with a start,
"I lost the *happy* out of my heart!
I have not felt easy since then," he sighed,
"And I could not be merry, although I tried;
Mother, I'm certain not all my play
Made up for the loss that I had that day."

Frank's tears fell fast as the summer rain,
But the *happy* came back to his heart again,
As he to his mother his fault confessed,
And her pardoning kiss on his lips was pressed.
Dear children, remember this simple lay,
For if in forbidden paths you stray,
Though you seem unhurt, and your fault be hid,
You will lose a treasure as Frankie did.

SUMMER ROSES.

Welcome to the roses!
That summer round us strews,
White, crimson, pink, and scarlet—
How varied are their hues!
Some delicately tinted,
As ocean-shells are seen,
And others, robed in mantles
Of moss so bright and green.
Welcome to the roses!
They flourish wild and free,
Upon the verdant hedge-rows,
That stretch o'er hill and lea:

While groups of merry children
Sit on the banks beneath,
And twine the buds and blossoms
In many a fragrant wreath.

Around the rich man's dwelling
Bright summer roses bloom,
And placed in gilded vases,
His chambers they perfume.
About the poor man's cottage
Luxuriantly they creep,
And through the lattice-windows
The clusters seem to peep.

"Buy my lovely roses!"
The girl with flowers entreats,
As she bears them in her basket,
Along the city streets.
And many weary toilers
Will cast a longing eye,
Upon the beauteous blossoms
They have not pence to buy.

But these fair summer roses
Are doomed to fade and fall,
The solemn lesson teaching,
That death will come to all.
May we be found reposing
On Jesus Christ alone,
Then joy will be our portion
When life's short day has flown.

THE HARVEST.

Harvest-time is here again,
And we see on hill and plain,
Bands of busy reapers toil,
Gathering riches from the soil.
Here and there, on either hand,
Golden sheaves in order stand ;
Surely from this pleasant scene,
Some instruction we may glean.

We remember months ago,
When this corn began to grow,
How we watched the emerald shoots
Rising from their hidden roots ;
Saw the tender ears unfold,
Saw them change from green to gold,
Till, in beauteous ripeness, they
Seemed to woo the harvest day.

Now may thanks arise to God,
For the produce of the sod ;
By His gracious care and power
He preserved it every hour ;
Sent the gentle dews at night,
Rain, and breeze, and sunshine bright—
Praise we then the God of heaven
For the harvest He has given !

Yonder reapers bring to mind
One great reaper whom we find

Busy round us every day,
Not one moment does he stay.
Death is ever reaping thus,
Soon his stroke may fall on us ;
O, may grace from God on high
Fit us each to live or die !

When the sheaves are gathered in,
Gleaners will their work begin,
And the scattered ears of corn
Gladly will be homeward borne ;
Little ones, to you I say,
Busy gleaners be each day,
Gathering in your early youth
Ears of knowledge and of truth.

There is one wide harvest-field
That will boundless riches yield ;
'Tis the Bible—Oh that we
Constant gleaners there may be ;
May the Holy Spirit's light
Shine upon it clear and bright,
While we search with faith and prayer
For the treasures hidden there.

THOUGHTS AT NIGHT.

Another day is ended—a swiftly passing day—
What mercies have attended upon our onward way !
And now we hope to slumber until the morning light,
But ah ! how great the number who cannot sleep
to-night.

Some through the hours dreary, are toiling for their
bread,
Toiling with fingers weary, and heavy aching head ;
If sleep seem on them weighing, its kindly spell they
shun,
Their needed rest delaying until the task is done.

How oft while on our pillows, we lie in slumber deep,
The sailors on the billows are tossed, and cannot sleep ;
And while in loud commotion the winds and waters rave,
Poor seamen in the ocean will often find a grave.

And oh ! how many languish each night on beds of pain !
They sigh and moan in anguish, and long for sleep in
vain ;
While loving friends in sorrow, watch thro' the long,
long night,
Until the dawning morrow shows faces worn and white.

It is indeed a blessing if we at evening's close,
Health and peace possessing, can have a night's repose ;
May every night remind us of the time that soon may
come.
When death in sleep shall find us, and the grave shall
be our home.

But there will be a waking, for at the Lord's great day,
The body, earth forsaking, will join the soul for aye ;
Yes, both shall live for ever—with God in bliss divine,
Or in the place where never a ray of hope can shine.

Oh, help us, Spirit holy, on Jesus to rely,
For they who trust Him solely need never fear to die ;
Asleep in Jesus falling, the soul shall mount the skies,
And the body, at His calling, shall in His likeness rise.

GRANDFATHER'S PICTURES.

FOUNDED ON A STORY IN "THE BAPTIST REPORTER."

One winter's morn, as Edward viewed
The road and pavement wet,
He cried, " Alas ! this horrid thaw
Has all my plans upset ;
Just one week more I wanted frost ;"
And then he kicked away
The skates that he had thought to use
So merrily that day.

His grandfather had heard with pain
The words in anger said,
And with reproving glance, he laid
His hand on Edward's head ;—
Reminding him how many poor
Were glad at heart that day,
Because the frost and piercing cold
So soon had passed away.

But still with frowns and angry looks
Young Edward's face was dim,
Till he was called by grandpapa,
To take a walk with him :

"We go to see some pictures, lad,"
The old man, smiling, said,
As through dark courts and narrow streets
The wondering boy he led.

At length they reached a gloomy room,
Where on the pallet lay,
A suffering girl, whose youthful life
Seemed ebbing fast away.
Soon Edward heard her say she felt
So glad the thaw had come ;
For frost and cold had bitter power
Within that attic home.

They left her, thankful for the gifts
That they had kindly brought,
And then the two, with quickened steps,
The parish workhouse sought :
There were the paupers, old and weak,
Yet smiling they appeared—
"'Tis by the weather, sir," they said,
"Our hearts to-day are cheered."

Such were the pictures, drawn from life,
The boy that morning saw ;
"What think you now," said grandpapa,
"About '*this horrid thaw*?' "
O may this lesson Edward learnt
Be on our minds impressed ;
Weather is ordered by the Lord,
And ordered for the best.

A SONG FOR SUMMER TIME.

Welcome to summer ! its gladdening smile
Is beaming once more in our beautiful isle !
Again does Jehovah His faithfulness show
To the promises given long ages ago.*

How pleasant the music of fair summer-time !
The streamlets flow on with a murmuring chime ;—
Bees hum in the sunshine, while softly the breeze
Sings with the songsters among the green trees.

A delicate fragrance is borne on the air,
For flowers are blossoming everywhere ;
The sweet fruits of summer hang thick on the bough,
And the corn for the harvest is ripening now.

God gives us the summer, then, oh ! may we raise
Our hearts and our voices together in praise !
For the beauties of nature around us unfurled,
And the mercies we have in this sin-smitten world.

For when our first parents in Paradise fell,
We know that sin entered this earth where we dwell.
Over all the creation it spread a foul stain,
Bringing sorrow, affliction, and death in its train.

But there is another, a heavenly home,
Whence evil is banished, where death cannot come,
And all who love Jesus, and trust Him, thro' grace,
Shall dwell with Him soon in that glorious place.

* Genesis viii. 22.

We are sinners, dear children, and only Christ's blood
Can cleanse our defilement, and bring us to God ;
May the good Spirit lead us to Jesus below,
Then we after death to His glory shall go.

Our beautiful summer will soon pass away,
Its brightness will leave us, its flowers decay ;
No changes like these in yon region of peace,
There joys are eternal, and never decrease !

WHAT THE BOYS WOULD BE.
FOUNDED ON A STORY TAKEN FROM "THE CHILD AT
HOME."

A band of brothers, one rainy day,
Had paused for awhile in their in-door play,
And were talking together with hearts elate,
Of the time they should reach to man's estate ;
The future, to them, seemed bright and fair,
And many a castle they built in air.

"A lawyer I mean to be," said one,
"And see that justice is always done,"
"I'll be a doctor," Charles cried out,
"Keep three or four horses and ride about."
So one and another told the rest
The trade or profession he liked the best.

Grandmamma sat in her easy chair,
And heard the children their plans declare :
"This one has not told his intentions yet,"
She said, as she glanced at the family pet,
Who sat on the floor, with her cotton at play,
While grandmamma busily knitted away.

"Come, Harry," said Willie, "proclaim to us all
What you will be when a man large and tall,"
And he lifted him up in a fond embrace,
While a bright smile shone on the young child's face ;
"When I am a great, high man, I'll be—
I'll be kind to my mother!" answered he.

"Dear boys," said grandmamma, "think of this,"
And she took her pet with a loving kiss :
"You may be wealthy and be clever men,
Yet be to your parents no comfort then ;
Let each one add to his favourite plan—
'I'll be kind to my mother when I am a man.'"

"IT WOULD HURT MY FATHER."

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN "THE CHRISTIAN
CABINET."

Two children, Frank and Charlie,
Upon a summer day,
In a large and pleasant garden,
Together were at play.
Beneath a tree they lingered,
Whose branches overhead
Were thickly hung with cherries,
So tempting, ripe, and red.

Said Frankie, looking upwards,
"How nice that fruit must be !
Let us gather some and taste it—
There's no one near to see."

"No, no," his playmate answered,
In a firm, yet gentle tone,
"For you know my father told us
To leave the fruit alone."

"But your father cannot see us;
And even if he knew,
He is far too kind to hurt you,
So let us pluck a few."

But Charlie by this reasoning,
Could not be turned aside;
"I know he would not hurt me,"
He instantly replied;

"But it would hurt my father,
If I should disobey;
I do not wish to grieve him,
So, Frankie, come away."
Then together from temptation
The little children fled,
And left untouched the cherries,
So luscious, ripe, and red.

True love and true obedience
By Charlie were displayed;
Let his behaviour, children,
Be your example made.
Oh, may you each remember
The moral of my song,
Nor hurt your parents' feelings
By doing what is wrong!

A SONG ABOUT THE WIND.

When winter's reign is over, how sweet the spring-time
breeze,

That toys among the branches of the freshly-budding
trees—

Calling from their slumber the flowers in the ground,
Releasing the streamlets, so late in fetters bound.

In the heat of glowing summer, how refreshing 'tis to
feel

The softly blowing zephyrs that round about us steal,
All laden with the fragrance they gather in their play,
Among the blooming flowers and the heaps of new-
mown hay.

When in the autumn season thro' the quiet woods we go,
And the withered leaves are falling upon the path below,
The wind that wafts them downward seems murmuring
a song—

“Like as the leaves are falling, so ye shall fade ere
long.”

As the stormy wind in winter blows keen from east or
north,

And round about our dwellings it rages as in wrath,
We think how it is lashing the ocean waves to foam,
And pity the brave mariners so far away from home.

Ah! in the homes of Britain how many bend the knee,
And pray at such a season for loved ones out at sea;

For we know that God can shield them—all nature owns
his sway—

The zephyr and the hurricane alike his word obey.

We hear the wind around us, and what it works we
know,

But yet we cannot see it, nor bid it stay or go.

So Jesus bade us learn from it, when long ago He
taught,*

How God the Holy Spirit upon poor sinners wrought.

Oh, hast thou felt, dear reader, His influence within,
Showing thee the evil and bitterness of sin?

Has He brought thee with repentance to trust in Jesus'
blood,

And turned thy wandering footsteps in the narrow way
to God?

How blessed are the prospects, how happy is the state,
Of those in whom the Spirit has wrought a change so
great!

But Oh! reflect, dear children, except thus born again,
A home with God in heaven you never can obtain!

SUMMER FLOWERS.

Sweet is summer with us, and over the land,
Bright flowers she scatters with bountiful hand;
In the grounds of the rich and the noble they bloom,
And the cottager's garden they sweetly perfume.

* John iii. 7. 8.

And not in the gardens alone they are seen—
In the wide-spreading meadows and woodland so green,
Under the hedges and where the brooks flow,
To gladden our eyesight the wild flowers grow.

Oh let the sweet blossoms, so fragrant and fair,
Make us think of Jehovah, His kindness and care ;
For all that we see, from the weed to the rose,
The wisdom and skill of their Maker disclose.

And here is a lesson for poor " Little Faith ;"
To His fearing disciples the dear Saviour saith—
" If God clothe the flowers that so soon will die,
The needs of His children He'll surely supply."

Christ Jesus the Lord in the Scriptures we view
As the red rose of Sharon and fair lily too ;
He lives now in heaven, but here on the earth
Makes known in the Gospel His beauty and worth.

The church of Jehovah now dwelling below
Is compared to a garden where choice flowers grow ;
Each known by Jehovah, He tends them in love,
Then gathers them home to His garden above.

How safe are the blossoms *that* garden within,
From the cold blast of sorrow and canker of sin ;
In beauty unfading for ever they bloom,
And shed for their Saviour their richest perfume.

HARVEST SONG.

Thank God for the blessings of harvest !
The corn is now laid up in store,
And Jehovah His covenant promise
Fulfil to His creatures once more ;
How many were anxious and troubled,
And feared what the harvest might prove ;
But God sent us suitable weather,
And deigned all our fears to remove.

The corn-fields, with reapers and gleaners,
That story of old brings to mind,
Of Ruth, and Naomi, and Boaz,
Where rich Gospel figures we find.
How blessed if you, dear young readers,
Are led in the season of youth
To the fields of the heavenly Boaz,
To glean precious wisdom and truth !

“ The harvest is plenteous truly,”
Said Jesus, “ but labourers few ;
Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest,
To send forth more labourers true.”
We see, as we look all around us,
The harvest is great in our day,
And still for more warm-hearted workers,
The saints to the Master may pray.

At the end of the world shall the wicked
Be bound for the burning, like tares ;
While the righteous as wheat shall be gathered
To mansions their Saviour prepares.

Oh grant, if Thy will, great Jehovah,
Both writer and readers may be
A part of the wheat in Thy harvest,
And garnered in heaven with Thee !

“ I LOVE YOU, SO I MUST COME AFTER YOU.”

“ I love you,” said my little child one day,
“ And so I must come after you, mamma;”
Simple the words, and spoken half in play,
Yet full of meaning true they surely are.
To what it loves the human heart will turn,
As flowers to the sun that lights the skies ;
’Tis sweet when in our homes we can discern
Heart drawn to heart by true affection’s ties.

But oh ! how solemn is the fact that all
By nature love and follow what is ill !
Not heeding or obeying wisdom’s call,
Led captive by the devil at his will.
Yes, if we look around we see the aim
Of hundreds, who by all their actions show,
That fleeting earthly pleasure, wealth, and fame,
They dearly love, and after them they go.

But what a blessed change when grace Divine
Teaches the soul what worldly things are dross—
Compared with glories which so brightly shine
Around the Saviour Jesus and His cross.
Ah, then how earnestly the spirit cries—
“ Draw me, O God, I will run after thee ; ”
Tends upward to the home beyond the skies,
For where the treasure is, the heart will be.

Dear reader, think, how is it now with you ?
After the world's vain pleasures do you go ?
If only worldly good you here pursue,
The end, alas must be eternal woe.
But should the Lord in sovereign mercy deign
To turn your heart His blessed ways to love,
When this brief life is over, you shall reign
In perfect endless bliss, with Him above.

BY BABY'S CRADLE.

Sitting now at eventide,
By the baby's cradle-side ;
As he sleeps so calm and still !
Solemn thoughts my bosom fill.
In this tiny helpless one,
Endless being is begun—
Sole existence that will be
Lasting as eternity.
He is born in sin we know,
Soon the evil seeds will grow ;
Heavenly wisdom we shall need,
In the right his steps to lead.
O may he be Spirit taught !
Clothed in robes by Jesus wrought,
Washed in His most precious blood,
Guided and preserved by God.
Those dear eyes—may they be
Turned from earthly vanity ;
And the lips in early days,
Teach them, Lord, to speak thy praise.

Little hands, now folded still,
May they learn to do thy will ;
Grant our child may wholly be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

What may be thy future lot,
Darling, we can show thee not ;
This we certainly can tell,
If God's child, all must be well.
O Thou gracious Lord of heaven,
Bless the children Thou hast given ;
Grant that each, through grace Divine,
May in endless glory shine !

IN MEMORY OF BABY.

Our precious babe has gone from our embrace—
How changed the nursery seems ! a blank is there :
We miss the darling's bright and happy face,
The one is gone that needed most our care.
His sufferings brief, are o'er, his soul is fled ;
Our baby boy is numbered with the dead.

The mother's heart aches as aside she lays
The many things her babe no more will need ;
And as we muse upon his winsome ways,
The truth comes home with bitterness indeed,
That the dear form we loved and tended so,
In earth's cold bosom now is lying low.

But ah ! we would not dwell too much on this,
 For though his body sleeps beneath the sod,
 In yonder blissful home his spirit is,
 Without a fault before the throne of God.
 Sinful he was, but washed in blood divine,
 The Spirit made him meet in heaven to shine.

And when the flowers about our baby's grave
 Shall in the spring to life and beauty rise,
 'Twill bring to mind that Jesus died to save
 His body, too ; and when He rends the skies
 To raise the dead, his precious dust, set free,
 Shall join his soul, and like the Saviour be.

Great is our loss, but yet we cannot say,
 For his dear sake, that we could wish him back,
 For life on earth is oft a thorny way,
 Sin, trouble, pain, and dangers mark the track.
 From every ill our darling now is free,
 Safe, gracious God, eternally with Thee.

We know our little child by Thee was lent,
 Thou hast a perfect right to take him thus ;
 Lord, sanctify the trial Thou hast sent,
 And bless, O bless the children spared to us :
 Grant that we all on earth may know Thy love,
 And with our dear one sing Thy praise above.

THE BLIND BOY MARTYR.

FOUNDED ON FACTS RELATED IN "OLD JONATHAN."

When cruel Popish Mary
Made English hearts to groan,
A poor blind boy in Gloucester
Was into prison thrown.
When brought before the judges,
This noble sightless youth
Would not deny his Saviour,
But firmly held the truth.

"When the sacrament is offered,
Dost thou believe," they said,
"Christ's body then remaineth
In the consecrated bread?"
"No, I do not," he answered,
"And I will never turn."—
"Then," said the wicked Papists,
"Thou shalt like others burn."

And so, ere long, the blind boy
Was fastened to the stake,
Rejoicing there to suffer
For Christ his master's sake.
The grace of God sustained him,
Till he was caught away
From blindness, shame, and torture,
To heaven's eternal day.

'Tis true that all this happened
Some centuries ago ;
Yet still the Popish monster
Is the same in all things now.
And Christians well may tremble,
Still in our island home,
To see how things are tending
To lead us on to Rome.

In many English churches
What Popish forms are found ;
Incense, pictures, candles,
And crosses there abound.
While Protestants, true-hearted,
Look up to God and pray
That Popery in England
May never more have sway.

God help us, dear young readers,
His precious truth to hold ;
Oh, may we prize the Bible
Far more than earthly gold !
Lord, give us grace and wisdom
To keep to what it saith,
And grant we may be faithful,
Yea, even unto death !

LESSONS FROM NATURE.

Christian, look upon the bees,
Working in the early morn,

All day long upon the breeze
Is their cheerful murmur borne.
Labour thus in Jesu's cause,
Earnestly while life is given,
Till his voice shall bid thee pause,
Calling thee away to heaven.

Mark the humble wayside flower,
Bending low beneath the blast ;
See it rising in an hour,
Sweeter for the rain that's past.
Meekly bow when trials come,
And when stormy days are o'er,
May thy heaven-born graces bloom
Fairer, brighter than before.

Listen to the warbling lark,
Soaring in the azure sky,
Almost lost to sight—but, hark !
Sweeter grows its melody.
So may Jesus and His love
Raise thy heart from earthly things !
May thy spirit mount above,
Like the lark that soars and sings

Christian, when the sable night
Draws her curtain overhead.
Look above, and mark the light
By the stars so softly shed.

Though thy path seem dark before,
Like a star pursue thy way,
Ever shining more and more,
Overwhelmed in "perfect day."

From every thing around, above,
Thou may'st some good lesson learn,
Tokens of God's boundless love
Meet thine eye at every turn.
Nature, like an open book,
Beautifies this earthly ball,
Oft upon its pages look—
'Twas thy God who wrote it all!

LINES ON THE DEATH OF G.W.B.
WHO WAS DROWNED IN 1857.

How life-like is the little form
O'er which we weep and grieve!
We fancy that beneath the shroud
We see the bosom heave.
No illness has his beauty marred,
The cheeks are tinged with red;
It must be sleep—alas! one touch
Tells us the boy is dead.

No human hand can waken him,
Or warm his icy brow;
His father's kiss, his mother's voice,
Are both unheeded now.

Ah ! when so full of joy and life
He ran to school that morn,
They little thought that still and dead
He would be homeward borne.

Oh Death ! why didst thou pluck this bud,
So rich in life and bloom,
While thousands, blown and withering,
Are waiting for the tomb ?
But no, we will not chide thee thus,
For thou wert sent by God,
We know His love is always great,
And humbly kiss the rod.

The blossom has not died away,
'Tis but removed above,
To flourish in Christ's garden, where
Are joy and light and love.
There saved from sin and earthly woe,
And blest for ever now,
Among the happy blood-bought throng
The crown is on his brow.

A sister weeps, she scarce knows why—
The youngest, full of glee,
Asks " When will brother wake from sleep,
And play again with me ?"
He ne'er shall wake again, dear child,
Until the dead arise ;
His body then shall join his soul
Beyond the starry skies.

The gracious Father, loving, kind,
On mercy e'er intent,
Before He took one child away,
Another child was sent.
God grant that with the parents dear,
The children He has given,
May know His saving grace below,
And sing His praise in heaven !

THE HARVEST FIELD.

A gracious Providence again
Hath opened wide His hand,
Blessing with stores of ripe and golden grain
Our favoured land.

Come forth abroad, and let the morning wind
Fan us with scented wings ;
Sweet emblems in the harvest-field we'll find,
Of higher things.

The little seeds that long ago were cast
Abroad upon the field,
Have risen up, and now, when months are past,
Rich fruit they yield.

Sometimes the Gospel seed, on good ground sown,
Lies long beneath the sod,
Yet it shall grow, and by its fruit be known
To be of God.

The gleaners come while yet the dews of morn,
They fearlessly behold,
To gather up the scattered ears of corn,
Like Ruth of old.

The Bible, Christian ! is your harvest field,
Search it with faith and prayer ;
Rich ears of hope and promise it will yield,
To soothe each care.

Luxuriant weeds among the ripening wheat,
Have flourished long in pride,
Now they are trod beneath the reapers' feet,
And cast aside.

So like rank weeds the wicked in this world
Amidst God's children grow,
But when the harvest comes they must be hurled
To endless woe.

Then shall the righteous brought from every land,
Like full ripe sheaves of corn,
Be gathered by Jehovah's angel-band,
And homeward borne.

Then to the garner of their Saviour-King
In joy and peace they'll come,
While heaven with this melodious shout shall sing—
“Blest harvest home !”

THE BEREAVED MOTHER.

Hark ! the Christian mother sighing,
Bending o'er that cradle-bed,

Where a shrouded form is lying—
'Tis her infant, still and dead!
She hath clasped his waxen fingers,
Strewed bright flowers o'er his breast,
On his face a smile still lingers—
Lovely is the babe at rest!

Now the mother's frame is shaken
With a grief she cannot stay,
"Lord," she cries, "why hast Thou taken
This, my precious one, away?
All my earthly hopes were centred
In my darling only boy,
But Thy messenger hath entered,
Robbing me of all my joy."

Hush that discontented murmur,
Pray unto thy Father, God,
That thy faith be rendered firmer
By this bitter, chastening rod.
He in wisdom and in kindness,
Calls thee from thy child to part,
Thou didst set him, in thy blindness,
Far too high within thy heart.

Often did thy fondness border
Closely on idolatry,
Heeding not Jehovah's order,
"Thou shalt have no gods but Me."

Now thine idol lieth shattered,
Soon to mingle with the dust,
And thy brightest hopes are scattered,
Canst thou call thy God unjust ?

Death, no longer rude and surly,
But a messenger of light,
Came and plucked thy floweret early,
Saving it from storm and blight.
Sorrow not, that God who gave him
Hath recalled the precious boon,
He is blest, Christ died to save him,
Nor has he entered heaven too soon.

Clothed in white and crowned in glory,
Happy now at God's right hand,
Hark ! he chants redemption's story,
One of Jesu's ransomed band.
Though all earthly ties are riven,
Let this thought rejoice thy heart,
Thou shall meet thy babe in heaven,
Never, never more to part !

LIVE IN LOVE.

Believers, live in love,
And by the fruits of grace,
Prove that the heavenly Dove
Within your hearts has place.
Remember ye are one
In Christ, the Prince of Peace !

Surely this thought alone
Should bid contention cease.

Although ye draw no swords,
Too oft, alas ! ye fight
With angry, cruel words,
With looks of rage and spite.
Well may the atheist scoff,
Well may the worldling sneer,
When casting meekness off,
Ye thus in arms appear.

When bitter feelings rise
Against a brother, pray
That Christ may make you wise
His precepts to obey.
Let angry thoughts remove
When His sweet words you view,
" I will that ye should love
As I have loved you."

Christians, if ye would fight,
Ye have a thousand foes,
That strive with hellish might
Your progress to oppose.
Take, then, the Spirit's sword,
And fight in Jesu's strength,
Ye shall have rich reward
And rest in heaven at length.

There all shall live in love,
In perfect peace and joy,
Sin shall no longer move,
Nor Satan's darts annoy.
There, all one ransomed throng
Shall meet one Lord above,
And sing the glorious song
Of His redeeming love !

THE DYING BELIEVER.

A child of God, an heir of grace,
Lay on his dying bed,
Over his thin and clammy face
The dew of death was spread.
He knew his final hour was near,
And while his pulse beat faint,
He whispered in his Father's ear,
With tears, this sad complaint :—

“ Father, I know that death will be
The end of sin and pain,
I feel his icy touch on me,
It chills my every vein.
'Tis true Thou hast for me prepared
Joys that no heart can know,
Yet, Father, I would fain be spared
To dwell awhile below.

" I care not for the world's bright gold,
All earthly joys have wings,
And by Thy grace I loosely hold
Such perishable things.
But, oh ! I leave with pain and dread
My darling child and wife—
Alone and weak, how will they tread
The thorny path of life ?"

He ceased, and soon a still small voice
Spake thus within his heart—
" Fear not, My child, in this rejoice,
'Tis better to depart.
Let earthly cares no more oppress,
Leave wife and child to Me,
The Father of the fatherless
Will their protector be.

" My gracious Spirit shall be given
To lead them in my ways,
And they shall join thee soon in heaven,
To sing my lasting praise.
And now, My child, I bid thee come,
I have a crown for thee,
The angels wait to take thee home
To dwell for aye with Me."

These gracious words, so softly said,
Removed each doubt and care,
He seemed to see around his bed
The angels " bright and fair."

“ Farewell, my dear ones, I am blest,
Saviour, I come, I come !”
One sigh—and then on Jesu’s breast
His spirit found a home.

WINTER EMBLEMS.

How bleak and bare the earth appears
Beneath stern Winter’s reign !
But see ! God sendeth snow like wool
To clothe the barren plain.
At first so dazzling white, it seems
A type of that fair dress
Which covers every child of God—
The Saviour’s righteousness !

But ah ! how soon the emblem fails,
For ere the close of day
It lies a soiled and trodden mass,
Its beauty past away.
The glorious robe that Christ hath wrought
Shall never bear a stain,
Satan and all his hosts may try
To blacken it in vain.

We miss the rippling of the lake,
The singing of the rill ;
Fast bound in icy chains they rest,
All motionless and still.

Jehovah sendeth out His word,
And makes His wind to blow,
The frozen shackles soon dissolve,
And sparkling waters flow.

When Satan round the sinner's heart
His icy fetters flings,
'Tis dead to every Gospel sound,
And cold to heavenly things.
But let the Spirit's quickening breath
Blow softly from above,
The ice will melt, and streams break forth
Of penitence and love.

Where all was hard and cold before,
There springs a well divine,
Of living water, pure and free,
Richer than milk and wine ;
It flows from Christ, the smitten Rock,
With every blessing rife,
In hearts renewed it springeth up
To everlasting life !

THE WORLDLING AND THE PAUPER.

An aged Christian, poor and weak,
Had sought his cottage door,
To breathe the fragrant air of spring
That blew from field and moor.

The cares and toil of three-score years
Had left on him their trace,
But a placid look of sweet content
Illumed his wrinkled face.

Ere long a worldling, passing by,
Addressed him with a sneer—
“Your lot since last we met, old man,
Has little changed I fear.
Still in this wretched cot you dwell,
Poor, ragged and alone,
And yet, you say, religion brings
Blessings and joys unknown.”

“Ah, sir,” the good old man replied,
“My lot may lowly seem !
But I have treasures rich and rare,
Of which you do not dream.
I am not poor, for I possess
A pearl of price so great,
’Twould far outvalue earth’s bright gems,
And all her crowns of state.

“Once I was dressed in vilest rags,
But now a robe I wear,
Wrought by my Elder Brother’s hands,
Spotless, entire, and fair.
My Father and my Brother, too,
Come oft to visit me,
And while I have such loving guests,
How can I lonely be ?”

“ Poor man, to hear your fancies wild
I cannot longer stay.”
Thus saying, with a pitying smile,
The scorner went his way.
He thought the old disciple mad,
(So Christ was deemed of old)
Nor dreamt that he in language quaint
Most glorious truths had told.

THE STARS.

Like jewels on the darkening robe of night
The stars shine one by one,
As brightly now as when their silvery light
On Eden shone.

How great the Power that formed each glittering
sphere,
And launched it into space,
That holds, from age to age, from year to year,
Each in its place !

In vain we ask, Can they be suns that shine
On worlds where creatures dwell ?
Enough for us to know the Hand Divine
Doth all things well.

Some think, by gazing on the orbs above,
To read man's earthly fate !
Christian, look higher, and read Jehovah's love
And wisdom great.

The Bible firmament is thickly spread
With promises so bright,
That, like the stars, their clearest radiance shed
In darkest night.

There beams one glorious Star—the brightest, best,
That gems the Bible sky !
Except it shone, the light of all the rest
Would fade and die.

It is the Star of Jacob—Christ the Lord !
But men see not its light—
So blind are they—till God His grace afford,
And give them sight.

Not in the Word alone it sheds its ray
To guide each child of God,
It shines within, and shows the hidden way
By pilgrims trod.

This heavenly Star will never, never set ;
Though fears and doubtings shroud
Its radiance for awhile, it shineth yet
Behind the cloud.

Christian, when thou dost leave this earthly scene,
Upwards thy soul shall soar,
To view that Star, without a cloud between,
For evermore !

DEATH AND THE CHRISTIAN.

DEATH.

Oh, Christian man, I call thee
To quit this lovely earth,
Fair nature's scenes of beauty,
Her sounds of joy and mirth.
The bonds of love and friendship
That round thy heart entwine
Must every one be broken,
I claim thee—thou art mine.

CHRISTIAN.

Oh, death, I do not fear thee !
Though earth is passing fair,
'Tis nothing to the glories
That I in heaven shall share.
My friends are very precious,
But I love my Saviour more ;
He is waiting to receive me
Upon the heavenly shore.

DEATH.

I shall lay my hand so icy
Upon thy fluttering heart,
And keen will be the anguish
When soul and body part.
Though friends may stand around thee,
To hear thy dying moan,
No succour can they yield thee,
And thou must die alone.

CHRISTIAN.

Again thy threats are harmless ;
To Jesus I will pray,
And strength divine He'll give me,
Sufficient for the day.
Yes, I can bear all suffering,
When Christ is on my side,
And dying will be easy,
Since He on Calvary died.

DEATH.

Oh, man, thou speakest proudly,
Thy words are very brave,
But thy boasting shall be silenced,
Within the darksome grave.
Thy body there shall moulder,
Cast out, abhorred of men—
Say, dost thou not acknowledge
I shall be conqueror then ?

CHRISTIAN.

Though worms destroy this body,
As it lies beneath the sod,
Yet it shall rise immortal,
And stand before its God.
This glorious song triumphant
Through heaven's expanse shall ring—
“ O grave, where is thy victory ?
O death, where is thy sting ? ”

APRIL SHOWERS.

See how the trees unfold their leaves,
The sparkling rain to meet,
While in its cup each flower receives
A pearl-drop pure and sweet.
Below the ground the moisture sinks,
Far down in earth's dark cells,
Each buried seed rejoicing drinks,
And with fresh vigour swells.

Now shower and cloud have passed away,
How fair the earth appears !
The songster carols forth his lay,
And nature smiles through tears.
The fragrant air, the emerald sod,
Each tender herb and flower,
Seem mutely giving thanks to God,
Who sent the welcome shower.

The rain fulfils His gracious plan,
Nor falls from heaven in vain ;
It makes the earth bring forth for man
Her blossoms, fruits, and grain.
Like genial showers, God's word of grace,
In love and mercy sent,
Drops softly in the appointed place,
And works His wise intent.

Christ's Church is like a garden fair,
Adorned with trees and flowers ;

Then, Christians, let this be your prayer—
“ Lord, send refreshing showers :
Some of Thy trees seem well-nigh dead,
But they shall fruitful prove,
And all Thy flowers fresh perfume shed,
When watered by Thy love.”

Upon the wicked God shall rain
A tempest fierce and dire,
And each his portion must obtain
In brimstone and in fire.
But they who in Christ's garden stand
Need fear no dreadful doom,
Transplanted to the better land,
They evermore shall bloom !

TWO PICTURES.

FOUNDED ON A CIRCUMSTANCE RELATED BY THE
LATE MR. KILPIN, OF EXETER.

Around a lovely baby boy
A group of mourners weep ;
His breath is short, his eyes are closed,
In suffering, not in sleep.
The lamp of life burns dim and low,
That lately shone so bright !
The hand of death seems now outstretched
To quench its flickering light.

Then by the bed God's servant kneels,
And lifts his voice in prayer :

"Lord, if it be Thy will, do Thou
This dying infant spare."
"No *ifs*! no *ifs*!" then wildly rose
The mother's bitter cry—
"It *must* be the Almighty's will,
My darling shall not die."

Such was the reckless, sinful wail
A mortal dared to raise :
The prayer is stayed—the listeners stand
In silent, deep amaze.
From that dread hour the child revived ;
Ere long, most strange to tell,
The mother in her arms received
Her idol safe and well.

* * * * *

When Years rolled by, that little child
Had grown to man's estate ;
A prisoner now condemned to die,
He waits his awful fate.
The eager throng is pressing round
The scaffold dark and high ;
And, while the mournful death-bell tolls,
The youth comes forth to die.

His broken hearted mother stands
Amidst the crowd below ;
Drawn by some influence, strange and strong,
She comes and cannot go.

“Oh that my son should live for this !”
She groans, ’mid blinding tears ;—
“Would that my darling boy had died
In childhood’s earliest years !”

“He shall not die ?” she once had said,
In wild, rebellious pride ;
He lived—and now her cry is this,—
“Oh that he then had died !”
Parents, when God sees fit to take
Your infants to his breast,
May he incline your hearts to say—
“Thy will, O Lord, is best.”

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

Another form laid in its narrow cell,
To join its kindred dust ;
Another spirit gone from earth to dwell
Among the just.

Our friend is dead, and tears of grief and love
Bedews her senseless clay !
Yet we rejoice—we know she lives above,
In endless day.

Our loss is great, and nature bids us weep,
But oh ! how great her gain !
Her happy soul bathes now in love’s great deep,
Free from all pain.

Now is the cross of suffering, borne so long,
Changed for the crown and palm;
The moan of anguish for the blissful song—
“Worthy the Lamb!”

Ah! not in vain was suffering’s painful sting :
Affliction was a rod,
Placed in her Saviour’s loving hand to bring
Her soul to God.

But yet, how light her heaviest woe compared
To heavenly joy and love,
The weight of glory everlasting shared
By saints above.

Although her mouldering form within the tomb,
In prisoned darkness lies,
We know that God will dissipate the gloom,
And bid it rise.

Then shall her body, in corruption sown,
Be clothed with glory bright,
Joined to her soul, shall stand before the throne,
In life and light.

Give us, O God, “like precious faith,” we pray;
May our hard hearts be riven :
Trusting in Jesus, may we tread the way
That leads to heaven.

ALL FLESH IS GRASS.

ISAIAH. XL. 6-8.

The evening breezes softly play
With fragrant heaps of new-mown hay ;
This morn it flourished fair and green,
With numerous flowers bright between ;
'Tis now upon the meadow strown,
Its beauty and its glory flown ;
Yet odours sweet around are shed,
Like incense floating o'er the dead.

Man, like the grass that clothes the field,
Before the scythe of death must yield.
To-day, in pride he lifts his head,
To-morrow, numbered with the dead.
His goodness shall pass away,
His doom is swift and sure decay ;
The place he filled on earth before
Shall know him not for evermore.

Though grass and flowerets pass away,
The Word of God shall stand for aye :
Whether a promise or a threat,
It never has been broken yet.
Could persecution's fiery rage
Destroy the Bible's printed page,
God's Word of truth should ne'er depart—
'Tis hidden in each Christian's heart.

The living Word is God's own Son ;
By Him Creation's work was done ;
Clothed in our flesh, as Son of man,
He wrought salvation's glorious plan ;
And all who in this Word believe,
Life everlasting shall receive,
The heavens and earth shall melt in flame,
But Christ is evermore the same.

THE TWO BUILDERS.

Oh, how simple is the story—
Simple, yet divinely grand—
Of the wise and foolish builders
On the rock and on the sand.
'Twas with this that Christ concluded
His discourse upon the mount ;
Saints may sing and sinners tremble
As they read the short account.

He who hears the words of Jesus,
And obeys by grace divine,
Builds where neither flood nor tempest
Can destroy or undermine.
'Tis on Christ, the Rock of ages,
That his house securely stands,
Jesus is his sure foundation,
Laid by God the Father's hands.

But the man who hears the Gospel
Only with the outward ear,
Foolishly and blindly ventures
On the sand a house to rear.
Worldly honours, wealth, and pleasures,
Lifeless works, and empty forms—
Many on these sands are building,
Thinking not of coming storms.

Now the sky is draped in darkness,
And the rain and stormy blast
Beat against each house in fury,
While the floods are rising fast.
Earth and hell may raise a tempest
Round the house upon the Rock,
But in vain : its sure Foundation
Holds it firm against the shock.

But the other habitation
Lies in ruins on the sand,
For the storm of God's displeasure
Shook it, and it could not stand.
If we build on aught but Jesus,
Terrible must be our fall ;
May Jehovah give us wisdom
On the Rock to fix our all !

THE SEASIDE.

Let us this morning stand awhile
By lovely ocean's side,

And view the crystal, sunlit waves,
Extending far and wide,
Though countless storms have o'er them passed,
They flow as fair and free,
As when the sovereign voice of God
Divided land from sea.

Sweetly, believer, canst thou muse,
Beside the ocean vast,
Upon the sea of Jesu's blood
Where all thy sins are cast.
See how the waters fill the sea—
Just so, in God's good time,
The knowledge of the Lord shall spread
O'er every land and clime.

These waves, so placid now and fair,
Full oft in anger roll,
And wildly dash upon the shore
As though they spurned control.
But though they roar, they cannot pass
The barrier God hath made ;
So far, no farther, can they come ;
By Him the waves are stayed.

When the disciples, tempest-tossed,
Sought Jesus in alarm,
He spake, and at His sovereign word,
The stormy sea was calm.

Though waves of trouble, doubt, and fear
The awakened spirit fill,
All shall be calm when Jesus speaks
So sweetly—"Peace, be still."

In ocean's depths are wondrous things,
And creatures small and great ;
These, one and all, for sustenance
Upon Jehovah wait.
What treasures rare, and sunken ships,
Are hidden 'neath the waves ;
But oh ! how many fellow-men
Lie low in ocean graves !

And when the Judgment trumpet sounds,
The sea must yield her dead,
And all the world must rise to hear
Their final sentence read.
Then the old heaven and earth shall pass,
The sea shall be no more,
And all the saints in endless songs
The Saviour shall adore.

LESSONS FROM THE BIRDS.

O child of God ! oppressed by anxious thought,
Go, look upon the birds ;
List to their songs with careless gladness fraught,
And think of Jesu's words :

“ Why take ye thought for meat ? the birds of air
Do neither sow nor reap ;
No barns have they—the Heavenly Father’s care
Each one doth safely keep.”

The God who marks the tiniest sparrow’s fall,
And deigns the birds to feed,
Will surely hear when His own children call,
And satisfy their need.

Over her nest the eagle fluttereth oft,
Teaching her young to fly,
Or beareth them upon her wings aloft
Where gentle cloudlets lie.

So did Jehovah bear his chosen race,
Through all the days of old ;
So will He now on wings of love and grace
His trusting saints uphold.

The harmless dove will furnish lessons meet
For every heaven-born child ;
The Bridegroom calls His bride in accents sweet—
“ My dove, my undefiled ! ”

The Holy Ghost descended like a dove
On Jesu’s sacred head ;
Where’er this Dove abides, the Saviour’s love
Is freely, sweetly shed.

See how the hen her wandering brood will call,
When danger draweth near ;
Beneath her feathers nestling one and all,
They rest and feel no fear.

“ Hide me beneath the shadow of Thy wings—”
This was the Psalmist’s prayer :
How blest are they whom God in mercy brings
To find a shelter there !

THE SPIDER’S WEB.

(During the awful massacre at Paris, by which so many Christians were removed from the present world, the celebrated Peter du Moulin crept into an oven, over the mouth of which a spider instantly wove its web ; so that when the enemies of the Christians inspected the premises, they passed by the oven, with the remark, that no one could have been there for some days. So easily can the blessed God devise means for the safety of His servants !)

Years ago, when persecution
Raged against the church of God,
And the blood of faithful martyrs
Cried for vengeance from the sod—
Then, like those in bygone ages,
Many servants of the Lord
Hid themselves in secret places,
To escape the hurtful sword.

One good man, pursued with fury,
In an empty oven crept,
There, by God’s unerring wisdom,
He was mercifully kept.

For no sooner had he entered
Than Jehovah shut him in—
At His will a humble spider
O'er the door began to spin.

Who can tell what prayers ascended
From that hidden one's retreat,
When he heard the hasty trample
Of his persecutors' feet?
Nearer they approached, then pausing,
He could hear their leader speak—
"Comrades, we must go still further
For the heretic we seek.

"Stay not here, this oven truly
Has been shut for many a day,
See the web across its entrance."—
Speaking thus, they went their way.
Surely gratitude and wonder
In that Christian's heart arose,
When he found how God had saved him
From the malice of his foes.

He who caused the greedy ravens
To supply His prophet's food,
Thus employed a feeble insect,
For His trusting servant's good.
So Jehovah shows His wisdom,
So His faithfulness He proves,
Making *all things* work together
For the good of those He loves.

"THE LORD LOOSETH THE PRISONERS."

PSALM CXLVI. 7.

In Holy Scripture we may read
Of God's delivering grace ;
He brought forth Joseph from his cell,
And ransomed Israel's race.
And oft as cruel men shut up
The apostles of the Lord,
So oft Jehovah set them free
To spread abroad His word.

There is a prison dark and drear,
By man's transgression built,
Where mortals lie in Satan's power,
Bound fast by sin and guilt.
Though now the flowers of sinful joy
May hide the iron chains,
If grace prevent not, they will drag
The soul to endless pains.

Each child of God, while unrenewed,
Is Satan's willing slave ;
But he must give up every one
Whom Jesus died to save.
In God's good time the Spirit makes
The soul its bondage know ;
The fetters break when Christ commands
" Loose him, and let him go."

Another prison, we are told,
Is Doubting Castle called ;
There many an heir of grace hath been
By dread Despair enthralled.
When, by God's help, the hand of Faith
The key of promise takes,
The bolts yield quickly, and the soul
A happy exit makes.

In Joseph's tomb the blessed Lord
Was laid, in grave-clothes bound ;
The sealed stone closed up the door,
And soldiers watched around.
But—God released His well-loved Son,
In spite of all His foes ;
Captivity was captive led,
When Christ to heaven arose.

Why should Jehovah's children fear
Death's prison-house, the tomb ?
For surely Jesu's sojourn there
Hath robbed it of its gloom.
The grave can have no victory now,
Since Christ the Saviour died ;
He rose, and they shall rise to reign
For ever at His side.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

This winter's night, amid the cold and gloom,
The year is dying fast ;

Soon, like a sire descending to the tomb,
'Twill sink into the past.

Now a sweet peal of merry chiming bells,
Welcomes another year ;
Through the night air, across the snow-clad dells,
The sound comes soft and clear.

Another Book of Time is now unsealed ;
What will its record prove ?
We cannot tell—the future is concealed
In wisdom and in love.

The God of providence in mercy crowned
The vanished year with good ;
At His behest the seasons in their round
Filled earth with joy and food.

Let us thank Him that in a quiet land
In safety we have dwelt ;
May He preserve our peace, nor let the hand
Of foreign power be felt.

Some, glancing back upon the year by-gone,
Behold its chequered way,
Strewn with dead joys and darkened hopes that shone
So bright last New Year's-day.

How many a household circle, then complete,
Now mourns some member dear ;
In life's fair wreath how many blossoms sweet
Have died in one short year !

Servants of God, who in the vineyard wrought,
Have been removed above :
Others, by sovereign mercy, have been brought
To taste redeeming love.

This day the child of God unto the throne
His grateful praises brings,
Sets up, like Samuel, his memorial stone,
And "Ebenezer" sings.

Though sin and Satan laboured day and night
His progress to oppose,
God hath his helper been, and in His might
He hath o'ercome his foes.

He still can trust, though storms and darkness come,
A Father's guiding hand ;
Each passing year conveys him nearer home,
Nearer the better land.

THE GUARDED HOUSE.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

One night there reigned in Sleswick town
Confusion and dismay,
For but a little distance off
Fierce troops of soldiers lay.
A truce restrained them for awhile,
But that short time of rest
Ended at midnight, when the town
By foes would be possessed.

Upon the outskirts of the place
An aged widow dwelt :
That wintry night beside her hearth
She with her grandson knelt ;
And from her lips to heaven above
A fervent prayer arose,
That God would raise a wall around,
And save them from their foes.

Then said the youth—" So strange a prayer
Will surely be denied ;
What ! will Jehovah build a wall ? "
And thus the dame replied—
" I prayed for God's preserving care ;
But recollect, my son,
Nought is impossible with Him ;
He speaks, and it is done. "

The dreaded midnight came at length,
And bands of soldiers passed
Into the town from every side,
While snow fell thick and fast.
The widow heard them pass her house,
With oaths and brutal jests ;
Soon every cottage round her own
Was filled with soldier guests.

But, strange to say, not one approached
The aged dame's abode,
Though larger than the dwellings near,
And close beside the road.

When morning came they saw the cause
Why all had passed them by ;
Before the house the drifted snow
Was piled up broad and high.

“ In this, my son,” the widow cried,
“ The hand of God is plain ;
Behold the wall that He hath built,
Nor doubt His power again.
He stooped to hear my evening prayer,
And answered from above,
Making the elements subserve
His purposes of love.”

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

How quickly on an April day
Doth sunshine follow shade !
In this an emblem of our life
Is strikingly displayed.
For grief and pain like shadows fall,
And joy yields sunshine bright,
Making this life a chequered scene
Of mingled shade and light.

So of the Christian pilgrim's course
The emblem will hold true,
For he, upon his heavenward way,
Finds shade and sunshine too.

When Christ, the Sun of Righteousness,
First rises on his heart,
Before His bright and healing beams
The shadows all depart.

Whilst Jesus sheds around, within,
A cheering, heavenly ray,
With joy the child of God pursues
His onward, upward way.
But sometimes sin and unbelief
Will raise a cloud between,
Hiding the Saviour for awhile—
Then, oh ! how changed the scene !

The pilgrim walks in shadow now,
And scarce the path can see ;
He moans—" Alas ! my sun has set,
To rise no more on me."
But no, ere long its light breaks through
The clouds that shade it o'er,
And on the pilgrim's road it shines
As brightly as before.

When he shall reach his mansion fair
Prepared beyond the skies,
The Sun's meridian beams will fall
Upon his raptured eyes :
In that blest sunlight he shall dwell,
And sing his songs of praise,
While not one cloud shall intercept
The bright, eternal rays !

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

Within his downy cradle a lovely infant slept,
While o'er his dreamless slumber a watch the mother
kept ;

She gazed upon her firstborn, so helpless and so fair,
Then, by his cradle kneeling, breathed forth a fervent
prayer.

“ Oh, Father ! ” thus she murmured, “ from thy bright
throne in heaven

Look down in tender mercy on the babe whom Thou
hast given,

On us, his feeble parents, the needed grace bestow,
That we may train our darling in the way that he
should go.

“ Alas ! this little creature, so pleasant in our eyes,
Is like a folded blossom wherein corruption lies ;
Sin lurks within his nature, a worm of deadly power,
Which will, if grace prevent not, destroy our precious
flower.

“ Like all the sons of Adam, our child is born in sin ;
O Lord, may he experience Thy saving work within.
He cannot see Thy kingdom, nor heavenly bliss obtain,
Except by Thy good Spirit, he first be born again.

“ I ask not for my darling the riches worldlings prize ;
May he have lasting treasure, laid up beyond the skies ;
Lord, guide him with Thy counsel along life's stormy
way,

And afterward receive him to realms of endless day.

“ Oh, look on us, Thy servants, so weak and sin-defiled,
And keep us, Lord, from making an idol of our child,
Give us Thy gracious Spirit, uphold us lest we fall,
And in our hearts’ affections may Christ be all in all ! ”

A SOLEMN WARNING.

FOUNDED ON A FACT RELATED IN THE “ GOSPEL
MAGAZINE.”

One pleasant day in early spring,
Two friends stood side by side,
Viewing a noble field of wheat
That stretched out far and wide.
Thus said the one—“ How promising
These fresh green blades appear !
Doubtless in autumn you will reap
A goodly harvest here.”

Then from the worldly owner’s lips
This impious answer fell :
“ *If God will leave my field alone,
The crop will flourish well.*”
In fearless and unfaltering tones
The awful words were said ;
God heard in heaven, yet did not strike
The sinful utterer dead.

No frost or blight destroyed the wheat,
But as the weeks rolled on,
On that as well as other fields
The summer sunbeams shone.

The dews of heaven descended there,
And soft refreshing rain—
But ah ! God's blessing was withheld,
And all the rest was vain.

The crops around grew fast and fair,
And doffed their robes of green ;
But in *that* field, all summer through,
No change or growth was seen.
In time the reapers' joyous songs
Were heard o'er hill and plain ;
The harvest moon in splendour shone
On sheaves of golden grain.

But as in spring and summer time,
So e'en in autumn late ;
The field that *God had left alone*
Retained its green-blade state.
God granted thus the farmer's wish,
Avenged His holy name,
And wrote upon that field of wheat
The bold blasphemer's shame.

THE BREAD OF LIFE.

The Israelites of old
By miracles were fed ;
The rock supplied their thirst,
The heavens their daily bread :

Through all their desert march
The heavenly manna fell,
Nor ceased till they were brought
In Canaan's land to dwell.

This wondrous "angels' food,"
By God to Israel given,
Prefigured Christ the Lord—
The Bread of Life from heaven.
"Your fathers," Jesus cried,
"Ate manna, and are dead ;
But he shall never die
Who eats this living bread."

This bread is Jesus' flesh,
On Calvary's summit slain,
When He, the God-Man, died,
That sinners life should gain.
The saints on earth rejoice
By faith on Him to feed,
And find this word fulfilled—
"My flesh is meat indeed."

Freely the manna fell ;
So Christ, the bread from heaven,
To every hungry soul
Is richly, freely given.
The Holy Ghost must make
The sinner feel his need,
Or he will ne'er desire
On Christ, the bread, to feed.

Oh, make us hunger, Lord ;
For in Thy Word 'tis said—
“Blest are the hungering ones,
For they shall all be fed.”
Show us that worldly joys
No nourishment afford,
And draw our souls away
From sin's enticing board.

By Thine Almighty power
Unto our hearts applied,
May we be brought to trust
In Jesus crucified.
Then shall we never die,
But, at the last great day,
Jesus shall raise us up
To dwell with Him for aye.

THE CHILD'S CONFIDENCE.

One night a ship was tempest-tost
Upon mid-ocean drear,
And nearly every soul on board
Was filled with awful fear :
One child alone, the captain's son,
No sign of terror showed,
Nor quailed when on the crested waves
The vessel wildly rode.

Then one who marked his calm control,
In wondering accents said—

“ My lad, upon this stormy night,
Say, do you feel no dread ?
Oh, fear you not lest these great waves
The bark should overwhelm ? ”
The boy replied—“ I feel no fear—
My father’s at the helm ! ”

How beautiful the simple faith
That did so steadfast prove,
And trusted in the trying hour
A father’s skill and love !
This little child perhaps may teach
A lesson to the saint—
To those in whom the light of faith
Burns oft-times low and faint.

Sometimes the Christian voyager
On stormy seas is tost,
And cries, while billows round him foam,
“ My every hope is lost ! ”
Nay, let him say—“ I will not fear,
My Father’s at the helm ;
My bark is guided by the hand
That rules creation’s realm.”

Oh, surely while this Pilot steers
The tempest cannot harm ;
In His own time, His sovereign voice
Will make the storm a calm.

Ere long unto a haven fair
The Christian's bark shall come,
And he for evermore shall rest
Within a heavenly home.

THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS.

What noble records history's page doth yield
Of martyrs brave and good,
True soldiers of the cross, who gladly sealed
Their faith with blood!

Against the Church fierce persecution's rage,
Hath burned from time to time;
Its victims it hath found in every age,
In every clime.

And in our own now highly favoured land,
The fires of Smithfield blazed;
And on the graves of England's martyred band,
Freedom was raised.

The faith of some by torturers dread was tried,
And while they writhed in pain,
"Recant, and ye shall live," their torturers cried,
But cried in vain.

With fearless hearts, with faith by God sustained,
Their cruel death they met;
Their dying words, on history's page retained,
Are fragrant yet.

For in the fire some sang with fleeting breath,
The praises of their King ;
Though robed in flame, for them the monster Death
Possessed no sting.

What nerved their hearts to bear contempt and scorn ?
What cheered them at the stake ?
The glorious fact that every pain was borne
For Jesu's sake :—

For His dear sake who in Gethsemane
Anguished in fearful pain ;
For His dear sake who died upon the tree,
Their souls to gain.

Compared to His, how light their sufferings were !
And then, amidst the fire,
Jesus was with them, giving strength to bear
Each pang so dire.

They bore the cross ; and now, life's woes all past,
They have received the crown ;
In heaven, before the Lamb of God, they cast
Their honours down.

They overcame through His rich blood alone ;
Now, through eternal days,
They strike their harps before the great white throne,
And hymn His praise.

"WE ALL DO FADE AS A LEAF."

ISAIAH LXIV. 6.

FOUNDED ON A PARAGRAPH BY MR. W. ARNOT, IN

"OLD JONATHAN."

Autumn has nearly past away,
And every forest bough,
That lately gleamed with red and gold,
Is bare and leafless now.
The fallen, withering leaves that strew
Each woodland path and glade,
Remind us of the Bible truth,
That we like them must fade.

Last spring we watched these very leaves
As into life they sprang,
But knew not when *this* one should fall,
Nor how long *that* should hang :
One thing was sure, that every leaf,
Then fluttering on the bough,
Would fall before the year had gone—
We knew not *when* nor *how*.

Like them we fade. Our life on earth
Is very short to all ;
And none can tell, save God above,
When we in death shall fall.
Wisely the future is concealed—
Enough for us to know
Life is uncertain, death is sure,
To all who dwell below.

Some leaves by mildew were destroyed
Ere spring had passed away,
While others in the summer fell
To canker-worm a prey ;
One dropped when, by a stormy wind,
The forest-trees were tost ;
Another hung upon the bough,
Till nipped by autumn's frost.

Like them we fade. In childhood's spring,
In youth's bright summer-day,
In manhood's prime, in wintry age,
Death comes and claims his prey.
How blest are they who are prepared,
Through grace, to live or die ;
Ready to live for Christ on earth,
Or reign with Him on high !

LINES ON A DROWNED CHILD.

A weeping group is gathered round
The fair young child so lately drowned ;
The loved one, death, with hasty hand,
Hath taken from the household band.
Sadly the parents think how oft
They watched his slumbers, deep and soft,
His health-flushed cheeks, and lips now blue,
Then crimsoned with a rosy hue.

How different now ! ~~not~~ e'en a streak
Of colour on the ice-cold cheek ;

Those silken curls of chestnut hair
Will need no more a mother's care ;
The limbs that lately moved at will,
And prattling tongue, in death are still ;
While on the face a violet shade
Proclaims the conquest death has made.

We look upon the casket fair,
The jewel has been taken—where ?
The cheering voice of faith replies—
“ Lift up to heaven your weeping eyes,
And there behold the precious gem,
Set in the Saviour's diadem :
He bought it with His blood, and now
It shines upon His glorious brow.”

Yes, 'tis a truth, we rest assured,
That Christ, the ever-blessed Lord,
Made full atonement on the tree
For all who die in infancy.
So we believe this little child,
Although, by nature, sin-defiled,
Hath found, through Christ, a lasting home
Where sin and suffering never come.

Mourners, your grief no tongue can tell,
But God the Lord doth all things well,
And in His hands, whose name is love,
This trial may a blessing prove.

E'en now, though dark the cloud appear,
His mercy shineth bright and clear ;
One child is not—but two are left ;
Ye might have been of *all* bereft.

Happy the parents who can say,
Beside their darlings' lifeless clay—
“ Father, we bow to Thy decree,
Our little one is safe with Thee :
He shall return to us no more,
But we, when this brief life is o'er,
Shall go to him in heaven above,
And sing for aye our Saviour's love.”

THE CHRISTIAN MOURNER COMFORTED.

Within a chamber dark and still
A mourner knelt alone,
And breathed a broken, sad complaint
Before her Father's throne.
Deep was her grief, for she had been,
By death, compelled to part
From one more dear than life itself,
The husband of her heart.

“ My God, oh why this trial sore ? ”
She moaned in accents low ;
“ The cup that Thou dost bid me drink
Is filled with bitter woe.

Lord, Thou hast far from me removed
My lover and my friend,
And now the evening of my days
In sadness I must spend."

She ceased, and on her pallid cheeks
Fell many a burning tear,
When through the silence of the room
A voice she seemed to hear :
"Be still," it said, "oh, murmuring soul,
And trust a gracious God ;
'Tis not in vain His children feel
Their Father's chastening rod.

"God will not suffer those He loves
On earthly props to rest ;
And heavy trials oft they need
To drive them to His breast.
Thy Maker is thy Husband still,
Unchanging in His power ;
His mighty arm can bear thee up
In this distressing hour.

"This heavenly Husband loveth more
Than earthly husband can ;
He loved and chose thee for His own
Before the world began.
Remember how on earth He died,
To open heaven for thee—
What other love can vie with His,
So boundless and so free ?

“ Mourn not for thy departed friend,
He lives in endless day,
And thou, ere long, shalt join him there,
To part no more for aye.
Soon thou, with him, wilt spotless stand
Before the great I Am ;
Part of the glorious Church of God,
The bride of Christ the Lamb.”

THE CAPTAIN AND THE QUADRANT.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

One morning o'er the ocean waves
A ship was making way ;
Around her thick and drizzling mists
Had hung for many a day.
That morn the captain in command,
Who knew and loved the Lord,
Committed to his God in prayer
The ship and all on board.

“ I leave them in Thy hands,” he said,
“ Thy faithfulness I know ;
Yet may it please Thee, gracious Lord,
This favour to bestow—
Oh ! do Thou bid the mist depart,
And give a cloudless sky
At noon to-day, that I may find
Which way our course doth lie.”

An hour before the appointed time,
On deck the captain came,
But over all the face of heaven,
The fog hung still the same.
The sailors on their captain looked
With unconcealed amaze,
As, with the quadrant 'neath his coat,
He watched the drizzling haze.

Twice to his cabin he retired,
And called upon his God ;
Then, with the quadrant in his hand,
Again the deck he trod ;
No change had come—the hour of noon
Was drawing on apace,
When a look of wonder and of awe
Stole o'er the captain's face :

For quickly, as by hands unseen,
The mist was rolled away,
And from the azure dome above
Beamed forth the orb of day !
But oh ! so “ dreadful ” seemed the place,
No word the captain spake ;
His trembling, nerveless hands could scarce
The observation take.

Soon he discovered all was well,
Then, when his task was o'er,
The mist returned, and all around
Grew sombre as before.

God honoured thus His servant's faith,
And turned his prayer to praise,
What tongue, what pen, can fitly tell
The wonders of His ways ?

THE CEMETERY.

Within "God's acre" let us walk awhile,
Green hillocks round us rise,
And low in earth beneath each grassy pile
Some fellow-mortal lies.

Men of all ranks are here. By yonder heap
A pauper's grave is known ;
And many have the places where they sleep
Marked by a simple stone.

A few are laid where drooping willows wave
Over funereal urns ;
But all distinctions vanish in the grave,
When dust to dust returns.

All ages, too, are here. A babe doth lie
Under this tiny mound,
While on the stone above the grave close by
A grandsire's name is found.

We can remember when no graves were here,
A little while ago ;
And now their number shows how year by year
The Reaper reapeth on.

As thus, enjoying life, and health, and strength,
The emerald turf we tread,
We scarce can realize that *we* at length
Must rest among the dead.

Oh, may the Christian's blessed faith be ours !
That when we come to die—
When the last foe smites all our mortal powers,
Our souls to heaven may fly.

For well we know that nought but mouldering clay
Is lying here below ;
The souls that dwelt therein live far away
In happiness or woe.

On many a grave the flowers peep thro' the mould,
And surely 'tis not vain
To read in them the truth so often told—
“ The dead shall rise again.”

For as the flowers, at their Creator's call,
Now spring from earth's dark breast,
So from their graves the dead, both great and small,
Shall rise at God's behest.

Body and soul shall then be joined for aye,
And evermore shall dwell,
Either amidst the joys of endless day,
Or in the gloom of hell.

TWO SCENES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN A SERMON BY MR.
BLOOMFIELD.

Long years ago, in Bethany,
A train of mourners moved
Towards the grave of Lazarus,
The man whom Jesus loved ;
There were Mary and her sister,
And Jews that pressed around.
And there, with troubled spirit,
The Son of Man was found.

“ Behold how much He loved him ! ”
Was whispered in the throng,
As, weeping tears of sympathy,
The Saviour passed along ;
And from His heart of tenderness
There issued many a groan,
'Ere from the rocky sepulchre
They rolled away the stone.

Around the grave they gathered,
A mournful, waiting crowd ;
Then spake the mighty Saviour
In accents clear and loud.
“ Lazarus, come forth ? ” He cried,
And lo ! the dead obeyed,
Ascending in his grave-clothes
From where he had been laid.

The Lord with power commanded—
“ Loose him, and let him go,”
While awe possessed each bosom,
Before so full of woe :
Oh, who can paint the gratitude,
The joy the sisters felt,
As at the feet of Jesus
With Lazârus they knelt!

* * * * *

Once on the sea of Galilee
A fearful storm arose—
The winds and waters thundered,
And fought like deadly foes ;
The disciples in their vessel
Were filled with deep affright,
Their efforts all seemed useless
Against the tempest's might.

But though the waves roared louder
And wildly dashed the spray,
Asleep upon a pillow
The wearied Master lay,
Nor woke till His disciples
In terror sought His side—
“ Lord, save us or we perish ! ”
In agony they cried.

Uprising from His slumber,
The Saviour gently saith—

“ Why are ye so fearful,
O ye of little faith ? ”
Then with a voice omnipotent
Commanded, “ Peace, be still ! ”
And surging billows instantly
Submitted to His will :

The stormy winds subsided,
And over all the sea
There reigned a glorious calmness,
A deep tranquility :
And then, it is recorded,
The men were sore afraid,
And marvelled at the wondrous Man ‘
Whom winds and seas obeyed.

* * * *

In these two scenes the Saviour
As God and man appears ;
As man, He slept for weariness,
As man, shed bitter tears ;
As God, He ruled the tempest,
And calmed its raging strife—
As God, His voice all-powerful
Restored the dead to life.

Oh, blessed are the people
With a Saviour such as this !
They may go to Him in sorrow ;
For He knoweth what it is ;

They may trust in Him for succour,
For unto Him is given
All power over all things
In earth, and hell, and heaven !

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

In Scripture oft the Holy Spirit paints
The lasting bond 'twixt Jesus and His saints ;
How full and sweet the types that He doth use !
May the same Spirit, while on them we muse,
Teach us to pray—" Lord, through Thy sovereign grace,
May we too find within Thy Church a place !"

Christ is the Shepherd and His Church the sheep,
The blood-bought flock that He will ever keep ;
The feeble lambs He gathers with His arm,
And in His bosom shelters them from harm ;
With His own Word He feeds them here below—
Soon they shall rest where heavenly pastures grow.

Christ is the Head, 'tis written in the Word,
His Church the body, joined unto the Lord ;
He to each member nourishment doth give,
Sundered from Him they could no longer live ;
He is the Head to feel each member's pain—
" Head over all things," to direct and reign.

Christ is the Rock ; on this Foundation sure
The Church is fixed, eternally secure ;

No floods of waters and no tempest's shock
Can overthrow this house upon the Rock ;
Satan tries hard, but he shall ne'er prevail ;
It stands on Christ, and He will never fail.

Christ is the Bridegroom ; in the Church we see
The bride He chose in past eternity ;
By Him on Calvary her debts were paid ;
By Him she is in spotless robes arrayed :
On Him she leans, and, by His power and love,
She shall be guided to His home above.

Christ is the true and ever-living Vine ;
His Church the branches that around Him twine ;
As to each branch a vine doth sap afford,
So saints derive their life from Christ the Lord,
And all the fruitfulness the branches show,
And all their beauties, to the Vine they owe.

How close the union by these figures taught !
And oh ! how wrong, how sinful is the thought
That those for whom the Saviour bled and died
Can ever perish, though they oft backslide :
The blood of Jesus ne'er was shed in vain,
And His whole Church with Him in heaven shall reign.

THE LAND OF THE LIVING.

"A saint was once dying, and another, who sat by him, said—"Farewell, brother, I shall never see you again in the land of the living." "Oh," said the dying man, "I shall see you again in the land of the *living*, that is up yonder, where I am going; this is the land of the dying."—C. H. SPURGEON.

One day a believer lay dying,
Awaiting his call to the skies ;
Beside him a fellow-disciple
Was watching with tear-moistened eyes ,
And he said, as he clasped with emotion,
The hand so enfeebled by pain—
"Farewell ! in the land of the living
I never shall see you again."

"Nay, brother," the dying one whispered,
"I trust that, through infinite grace,
We may meet in the land of the living,
And find there a permanent place ;
This world is the land of the *dying*,
'Tis the land of the *living* above—
I am going to dwell in its glory,
And sing the Redeemer's great love."

Yes, this is the land of the dying—
The hopes that we cherish, decay ;
The bright blossoms around us unfolding,
Must die ere the year pass away ;
So earth's children each moment are dying,
Fulfilling the sentence so just,
Proclaimed by Jehovah to Adam—
"Thy dust shall return unto dust."

When, in the fair garden of Eden,
The serpent, with poisonous breath,
Tempted Eve and her husband to ruin,
Sin entered, and by it came death.
For sin soul and body are sentenced,
To eternal death's terrible doom !
But from this all believers in Jesus
Are freed, since He died in their room.

In heaven, the land of the living,
Sin, sorrow, and death are unknown ;
There the water of life, clear as crystal,
Proceeds in a stream from the glorious throne.
And there, on each side of the river,
The tree of life spreadeth its roots ;
No longer a sword flames before it,
But all may partake of its fruits.

God's saints from all ages and nations,
In the land of the living shall meet—
A multitude no man can number,
Their happiness rich and complete.
They with Jesus, their living Redeemer,
For ever and ever shall reign,
And sing to the praise of His glory
Who once was on Calvary slain !

PREACHING EVERYWHERE.

When here on earth, the blessed Lord
In many a place proclaimed the Word ;

L

In Jewish synagogues He taught,
Or to the Temple would resort ;
And there the truths that He held forth,
Oft times aroused His hearers' wrath ;
But some this faithful witness bore—
“ He speaks as man ne'er spake before.”

We read how, in a desert place,
He preached to crowds His truth and grace ;
And on the mountain took His seat
While thousands gathered at His feet ;
Nor can we easily forget
That once, on Lake Gennesaret,
He sat in Simon's ship to teach
The multitudes that lined the beach.

God's servants, following their Lord,
Preach everywhere the Gospel Word ;
In many a public house of prayer
They publish it—nor only there ;
In warehouses, in barns, in halls,
And e'en within the théâtre's walls,
And when bright summer rules the land,
Out in the open air they stand.

In the great temple built by God—
Its roof the sky, its floor the sod—
His servants earnestly proclaim
The glories of the Saviour's name ;

In daisied fields, on commons bare,
And in the city thoroughfare,
Or on the ocean's golden sands,
The Word is preached to listening bands.

Such England's liberty ! We know
In many lands it is not so,
And, years ago, God's children here
Worshipped in secrecy and fear.
But ah ! it cannot matter where
The people meet, if Christ be there ;
And preaching soon or late must fall,
That holds not Him as all in all.

SUMMER BEAUTIES.

Fair summer, robed in green, has come
To gladden earth again,
And lavishly her gifts are strewn
O'er valley, hill, and plain.
The Christian, as he walks abroad
On these bright summer-days,
Finds earth a book whose every page
Proclaims his Father's praise.

The tiny insect in the grass,
The sun that shines above,
Both show to him their Maker's skill,
His power and His love.
And nearly all the beauties spread
Above, beneath, around,

Recall some truth or promise sweet
In holy Scripture found.

The flowers that deck the fields and woods,
The birds that wing the air,
Still illustrate his Master's words
Against o'er-anxious care.
And as he views the wide-spread fields
Of growing, waving corn,
How many precious Bible texts
Into his mind are borne !

When o'er the heaps of fragrant hay
The wandering zephyrs pass,
They seem to whisper in his ear
The words—"All flesh is grass."
The flowing streams—the fruit-bowed trees—
The dewdrops on the sod—
All bring to mind some truth Divine
Writ in the Word of God.

"I thank Thee, Father," he exclaims,
"For 'making earth so fair,
But earth, e'en in her brightest robes,
Cannot with heaven compare.
For summer soon will pass away,
The flowers must fade and die ;
These trees, ere long, will leafless stand
Beneath a wintry sky.

"Fading away are all things here,
But it will not be so
In heaven, the glorious, better land,
Where I, a pilgrim, go.
No change, no death, no winter there—
Its light shall ne'er grow pale—
Its tree of life is ever green—
Its streams can never fail."

PASSING THROUGH THE WATERS.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Isaiah XLIII. 2.

We have read how ancient Israel passed dryshod thro'
the deep,
And how Jordan, when they crossed it, "rose up upon
a heap :"
So, sometimes, when the Christian dreads a flood of
woe to meet,
His God between the billows makes a pathway for his
feet ;
But oft he struggles thro' the waves, and feels them
surging round,
And then this olden promise most comforting is found.

When those who have experienced the power of Jesus'
blood,
Pass, like their Lord and Saviour, thro' the baptismal
flood,

This promise of Jehovah is proved most sweetly then ;
For, tho' the Master's ordinance may be despised by
men,
They feel that God is with them, while this public proof
they give
Of their love to that dear Jesus who died that they
might live.

When thro' affliction's waters the pilgrim has to pass,
When the waves are rising round him in a raging,
foaming mass,
Above their angry thunder he hears a still small voice,
It cheers his fainting spirit, and bids his soul rejoice—
“ Fear not, for I am with thee ; altho' the floods
surround,
My arms are underneath thee, and thou shalt ne'er be
drowned.”

And, at last, thro' death's dark river each child of God
must go ;
But, tho' the waters buffet him, they shall not overflow.
We read of Bunyan's pilgrim, how he struggled hardly
thro' ;
But yet, ere he passed over, he found this promise true.
The wicked well may tremble at the river deep and
wide—
God's saints may boldly enter, since Jesus Christ hath
died !

Take courage, O believer ! God's promises are sure,
And thro' each flood thou meetest thy Lord has passed
before :

He was baptized in Jordan, as holy Scripture saith ;
He passed thro' deep afflictions, and thro' the stream
of death ;

Yea, more—the mighty Saviour was immersed in floods
of woe,

Whose fearful depth and violence His people ne'er can
know.

For the wrath of the Almighty, that was due unto the
guilt

Of all the countless multitude for whom Christ's blood
was spilt,

Rolled o'er the spotless Substitute, like billows of the
sea,

When He grovelled in the garden—when He hung upon
the tree :

Since Christ passed thro' these waters, they touch no
ransomed soul,

But ever round the wicked the dreadful waves must roll.

HARVEST HYMN.

The earth has yielded once again
Her precious stores of ripened grain ;
The last full sheaves of golden corn,
Home to the garner have been borne ;

The reapers' song we hear no more,
Even the gleaners' toil is o'er,
And fields that lately beauteous were,
Are all deserted now and bare.

The corn is safely gathered in,
Then let new songs of praise begin ;
Let us to God an altar rear,
For He with goodness crowns the year.
Again Jehovah has made good
The promise that so long has stood—
"While earth remains"—oh ! words of peace !
"Seed-time and harvest shall not cease."

Except the Lord had blest the grain,
Man's labour had been all in vain ;
He deigned with gentle showers to feed
Each tiny earth-imbedded seed ;
Beneath His sunlight, rain, and dew,
From stage to stage the corn-blades grew,
And then He sent bright harvest days—
To God alone be all the praise !

When God's own word like seed is sown,
On hearts prepared by Him alone,
Blest with the beams of Jesu's love,
And gracious showers from heaven above :
Into a fruitful plant it grows—
Life, strength, and fruit to God it owes ;
For as in nature, so in grace,
From first to last His power we trace.

The angels, in earth's harvest-day,
Shall bear God's saints, like sheaves, away ;
They in the garner will be stored,
But all who do not love the Lord
Shall be consumed like stubble dry,
Before the wrath of God most high.
Lord, grant that we through grace may be
Like ripened sheaves prepared for Thee !

THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

'Tis well sometimes to turn aside,
Upon the dead to gaze—
What sharp rebukes to human pride
A shrouded corpse conveys !
But, oh ! we mourn when loved ones sleep
In icy death's embrace,
And sadly watch corruption creep
Across a well-known face.

How soon the features that we loved
Grow painful to behold !
Quickly our friends must be removed
To perish 'neath the mould.
Solemn and humbling is the thought
That we, who live to-day,
To their condition must be brought,
And turn to putrid clay.
Death toils throughout this spacious earth,
Unceasing day and night,

The corn was sown, and flourished,
And soon was borne away,
And stored up in the garner
Upon Jehovah's day.

The scoffer gazed in triumph,
And almost failed to mark
That in the heavens above him
A cloud was gathering dark :
Ere long from out the blackness
The electric fluid came,
And granary and treasure
Were wrapt in lurid flame !

Soon only ashes smouldered
Where barn and wheat had been,
And the owner's reason tottered
As he beheld the scene :
In drivelling insanity
Some weary years he past,
And without return of reason
The scorner died at last.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE
CONSORT.

Oh ! mournfully the news of woe
Throughout our land was spread,
When it was breathed in accents low—
“ Our noble Prince is dead.”

Scarcely at first we would believe,
But, ah ! we could not doubt,
When on the quiet Sabbath-eve
The minute-bell rang out.

Our nation will be grieved at heart
This mournful Christmas time,
Grieved that her Prince should so depart
In manhood's glorious prime.

She will not as a form alone
Deep lamentation make,
For Britain loved him for his own,
And for her Sovereign's sake.

While musing on this trial rare,
Each British heart, I ween,
Will offer earnestly the prayer—
“ God help our widowed Queen ! ”

Only a few short months ago
She mourned a mother dear ;
And now her bitter tears must flow
Beside a husband's bier.

And, oh ! may God a Father prove
Unto the fatherless !
May each and all in His great love
An interest possess.

A THANKSGIVING HYMN.

(On the occasion of war with America being happily averted.)

Thank God ! sweet words of peace have come
To cheer us in our inland home ;
Our home where lately many a breast
With dread of war was sore opprest ;
Where, with one heart all Christians true
In public and in private too,
Sent up an earnest cry to God
That He would spare the fearful rod.

These fervent prayers Jehovah heard,
And graciously fulfilled His word—
“When trouble threatens, call on Me,
I surely will deliver thee,
And thou shalt glorify My name.”—
Yes, God our highest praise doth claim ;
Let Britain then, with one accord,
Sing loud hosannas to the Lord.

He who can turn men's hearts at will
Hath thus commanded—“Peace, be still ?”
The Hand that lately laid us low,
In mercy spares this second blow—
Saves us from war with those who stand
In natural union with our land,
Knit unto us by ties of blood,
And bonds of closest brotherhood.

For His amazing mercy shown,
We praise the Lord—nor this alone ;
We pray that soon all strife and war
May be subdued in lands afar.
Since that will be a blessed time,
When peace shall spread through every clime ;
But this glad season cannot be,
Till Jesus reigns from sea to sea !

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER.

The child of God, while here below,
Must lead a soldier's life ;
His enemies are fierce, and oft
Engage him in the strife ;
Satan, the world—his outward foes—
Are leagued with those within,
Foul traitors lurking in the camp,
Self, unbelief, and sin.

But all God's saints have armour strong,
And weapons proved of old,
Helmet and breast-plate, sword and shield,
As Paul hath plainly told.
They have a heavenly Captain, too,
All-glorious in might ;
Though weak themselves, in Jesu's strength
They can with boldness fight.

Thank God ! the Christian soldier's foes
No final harm can do ;
Jesus hath conquered, and through Him
His people conquer too.
On earth they seldom find repose,
But when the fight is o'er,
They, with their Captain, shall enjoy
Sweet rest for evermore.

Each warrior brave will one day lay
His well-proved weapons down,
And from his Captain's hand receive
The victor's fadeless crown.
To " him that overcometh " here,
Rich blessings shall be given,
Joys that no mortal can conceive,
By Christ the Lord in heaven.

While each believer daily strives
Against his numerous foes,
(And how severe the conflict is,
His Captain only knows)—
The Church of God, a valiant host,
Should join with one accord,
And boldly fight in earth's wide field
The battles of the Lord.

This mighty army shall obtain
A victory complete,
When all the nations of the earth
Bow low at Jesus' feet.

His foes will then His footstool be ;
Wars shall for ever cease ;
The Church, with Christ her Captain-King,
Shall reign in endless peace !

THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM.

We sing the pilgrim ; but our lines
Will poor and feeble seem
When we recall the glowing words
Of Bunyan's prison dream.
The "pilgrim's progress" he describes
By emblems grand and clear,
That charms the wise man and the child,
The peasant and the peer.

Whence doth the Christian pilgrim come ?
Where is his native place ?
We answer—he was born in sin,
Like all of Adam's race ;
And he pursued, with willing feet,
The broad and downward way,
Until Jehovah's sovereign voice
In mercy bade him stay.

What are the features of the way
By Christian pilgrims trod ?
'Tis one whose only entrance door
Is Christ, the Son of God.

Strait is the gate, the Saviour said,
And narrow is the path ;
And as the pilgrim walks therein
Full many a change he hath.

Now he is lingering with delight
By clear and living streams ;
Jesus, his Sun, around him sheds
Celestial, cheering beams :
Anon, dark clouds will veil the sky,
And dangers he will meet,
While thorns and briars vex and wound
His wayworn, wearied feet.

The pilgrim stumbles too, at times :
Or, from the upward way,
In devious and forbidden roads
He wanders far astray ;
But, though he stray, his Father's arm
Will surely bring him back,
Mourning that ever he had left
The right and narrow track.

And whither is the pilgrim bound ?
He seeks a city bright,
With jasper walls and gates of pearl,
God and the Lamb its light ;
Thither has Jesus gone before
His mansion to prepare ;
And what are all his earthly woes
Compared with glory there ?

THE CHRISTIAN WRESTLER.

We read how Jacob wrestled once,
At night, by Jabbok's ford,
Nor rested till he had obtained
The blessing of the Lord.
Then Peniel—"the face of God"—
The patriarch called the place,
For there he with Jehovah strove,
And saw Him face to face.

'Twas then his title was exchanged
For Israel—glorious name!
And saints of God in every age
The royal term may claim.
E'en now the Israelites indeed,
Who walk earth's thorny dale,
All wrestle earnestly in prayer,
And with their God prevail.

Yes, they prevail—for Jesus' sake,
And by the Spirit's power,
They bring down blessings from above
In many a copious shower.
"Prayer moves the arm that moves the world;"
All that the heirs of heaven,
Shall ask of God in Jesus' name,
Believing, shall be given.

When God a wrestling spirit gives,
O ! may we not conclude,
That soon or late He means to send
The much-desired good ?
The children of His wrestling saints,
Have often times been blest,
Long after those who prayed for them,
Have entered into rest.

True Christians wrestle with their God,
But ah ! this is not all—
The prince of darkness is their foe,
And strives to make them fall.
He may *throw down*, but to *destroy*
The fiend shall try in vain ;
Although God's children oft may fall,
They surely rise again.

For to such wrestlers help divine
Is given from above—
Help from the master who Himself
On earth with Satan strove :
And though he bruised the Saviour's heel,
The Saviour bruised his head,
And shortly all the Church of God
Upon the foe shall tread.

THE CHRISTIAN SERVANT.

God's servant, in the highest sense,
Was His beloved Son,

Who willingly performed the work
None other could have done :
In servant's form He carried out
The heavenly plan of grace,
The great Jehovah glorified,
And saved the chosen race.

Since Jesus served, His saints go free ;
Though they are held at first
In Satan's grasp, in God's own time
The bonds by grace are burst.
Then they are free, yet servants too,
For Christians gladly give
Their loving service to the Lord,
Who died that they might live.

Some serve as heralds, to proclaim
Salvation from above ;
As Christ's ambassadors, who come
With messages of love ;
As under-shepherds, sent by God
To feed the chosen sheep ;
As watchmen, who on Zion's walls
Their trusty stations keep.

Such places many cannot fill,
But all whose hearts are warm
With love to Christ, will find for Him,
Some service to perform :

Trifling may seem the deeds they do,
And small the gifts they make,
Yet God accepts them, if they bear
This stamp—"For Jesus' sake."

Diligent servants all should be—
With heart, and soul, and might,
Working while it is called to-day,
For soon will come the night :
And single-hearted servants, too,
Serving the Lord alone,
Seeking in all that they perform
His honour, not their own.

Obedient servants, following on
Wherever God may lead,
Obeying, though to flesh and blood
The task seem hard indeed :
And watchful servants, knowing not
How near may be the hour,
When Christ, their Master, shall appear
With glory and with power.

THE GATHERED FLOWER.

A gardener day by day had watched with care
A favourite rose, so fragrant and so fair,
That when to full perfection it should come,
He thought to send it to his master's home.

It was the rarest flower the tree had borne—
He marked its growing beauties every morn ;
But ah ! one day he missed his garden gem,
A hand unknown had plucked it from the stem.

Some servant stole the rose, the gardener thought,
And he, with angry brow, the culprit sought ;
But soon his feelings of displeasure turned
To joy and satisfaction, when he learned
That 'twas his master who had passed the bower,
And for its special beauty culled the flower ;
Now at his mansion, in some gorgeous room,
The gardener's favourite shed its rich perfume.

Then said his master, " You with gladness spare,
To grace my home, your rose so bright and rare ;
And yet, because your Lord of late removed
From your home bower, one blossom that you loved,
Your heart rebels ; you are unreconciled
To God's wise will in reference to your child ;
Think, rather, is it not an honour given
That he should take your flower to bloom in heaven ?"

How often parents, like this gardener, find
Rebellious feelings rising in the mind,
When the Almighty's gracious sovereign hand
Removes an infant from their household band !
Mourners, 'tis hard to part from those you love,
But this remember—they are best above ;
No frost, no blight, no stormy winds are there—
Which while on earth your flowers might have to bear.

God takes your babes, and they—oh ! think of this !
Are by creation and redemption His ;
Christ shed for them His blood—a wondrous price ;
His spirit meetened each for paradise :
There no destructive canker-worm of sin
Can carry on its deadly work within,
But pure and perfect, in the realms on high
Your children bloom, and they shall never die.

A SUMMER NIGHT.

How calm and lovely is this summer night !
Cloudless the heavens appear :
While earth below is bathed in silvery light
Shed by the moonbeams clear.

See how the dew with gentle mist around,
Is falling from on high ;
Gladly the thirsty plants and heat-parched ground
Drink in the rich supply.

Jehovah said that he would be as dew
To Israel's chosen race ;
Is not this promise even now proved true
In each believer's case ?

Sometimes the Christian's faith, and hope, and love,
Appear but half alive,
But when the dew is given from above
They will again revive.

The starry firmament, a glittering page—
Is opened overhead ;
The same that David, in a bygone age,
With awe and wonder read.

Still do the heavens Jehovah's glory show,
Still, as the page we scan,
We may, like David, bend in spirit low,
And cry—" Lord, what is man ?"

Some promises, like stars, are noticed not,
When all around is light ;
'Tis when affliction shades the pilgrim's lot
They shed their radiance bright.

The Church is likened to yon orb above ;
She is in Jesu's view
" Fair as the moon," and this we soon may prove
To be an emblem true.

As from the sun the moon her light obtains,
And in herself has none ;
Even so the Church of God her brightness gains
From Christ, and Christ alone.

Christian, a little while, and thou shalt live
Where there shall be no night,
Where neither moon nor stars their radiance give,
But Jesus is the light.

When these material heavens have passed away,
Passed with the earth and sea ;
Then thou wilt dwell, in bright unclouded day,
Through all eternity.

SMALL BEGINNINGS.

FOUNDED ON A FACT RELATED IN "OLD JONATHAN."

A man and wife who loved the Lord,
Dwelt in a lonely cot ;
Thither, in His wise providence,
God had ordained their lot.
No house stood near, but close at hand
A dreary common lay,
And all the public means of grace
Were several miles away.

For many a day this woman's heart
Went up to God in prayer,
That He would deign to show her how
To serve Him even there.
One day her husband she addressed,
And said—in faith made bold—
" If we should pray with open door,
We might a meeting hold."

" But who would come," he doubting said,
" This unfrequented way ? "
" Leave that to God," the wife replied,
" 'Tis ours to watch and pray."

That evening, when their toil was done,
 Around the open door
They met—the husband, wife, and child,
 And chairs were set for more.

Two women, passing o'er the heath,
 Heard on the summer air
The notes of praise ; they sought the cot,
 And paused, then entered there.
They listened to the chapter read—
 In hymn and prayer took part ;
And thus refreshed, pursued their way,
 Each with a joyful heart.

At evening time the following week,
 They came across the plain,
With more than twenty friends beside,
 And joined in prayer again :
God blessed them there, and week by week
 They met on Him to wait,
Until their numbers so increased,
 The place became too strait.

Pastors and teachers sent by God,
 Came to that lonely spot ;
And there, at length, a house of prayer
 Was built close by the cot.
Thus the small seed that had been sown
 In faith, with earnest prayer,
Sprang up, and by Jehovah blessed,
 A hundred-fold it bare.

BOUND WITH GRAVE-CLOTHES.

John xi., 44.

We read in Bible story how the Lord
Raised buried Lazarus by His mighty word ;
“ Come forth,” He loudly cried, and at the sound,
He that was dead came forth with grave-clothes bound ;
He could not see his kindred standing by,
Nor clasp his loving Saviour, though so nigh,
Till Christ was pleased his freedom to bestow,
Commanding thus—“ Loose him, and let him go.”

In this account of Lazarus we may trace
Some points of likeness to the Christian’s case,
When he from nature’s grave by Christ is called,
And finds himself in grave-clothes held enthralled :
His hands are bound ; he cannot stretch them forth,
To grasp the Saviour in His matchless worth :
His feet are bound ; he feels he cannot run
In his own strength to Christ the blessed One.

His face is bound about ; he cannot see
Christ slain *for him* upon the accursed tree,
Nor can he fully see the depth of sin,
That like a deadly poison works within :
His lips are bound ; although a sigh or groan,
Or broken prayer may reach the Father’s throne,
He cannot utter such a phrase as this—
“ I know that Christ is mine, and I am His.”

If it be asked—how were these grave-clothes wrought ?
By sin, we answer ; it was sin that brought
Death into this fair world ; 'tis sin that holds
All men by nature dead within its folds.
But, by God's grace in those of whom we speak
Life is implanted, though it seems so weak,
That they themselves will doubt that e'en a spark
Can dwell in hearts so cold, and hard, and dark.

But they, unlike the dead, their bondage know,
And if they could would fain to Jesus go ;
Long they may wait, but at the appointed day,
“ Loose him, and let him go,” the Lord will say :
The feet, unbound, then run the heavenly race—
The hands with joy the crucified embrace—
The tongue unloosed, this testimony gives—
“ I *know* that *my* Redeemer ever lives.”

THE TRUE VINE.

John xv.

Over the Temple-gate of old
A vine was sculptured, we are told ;
Pure gold was every leaf and stem,
And every grape a precious gem ;
'Twas a fair sight, and some conclude
This work of art the Saviour viewed,
When He declared this truth divine—
“ I am the *true*, the living Vine.”

'Tis of this Vine that we would sing :
From Him the saints like branches spring ;
The Father is the Husbandman,
And oh, how gracious is His plan !—
“ Lest any hurt,” we hear Him say,
“ I keep My vineyard night and day,
And every moment in My love
I water it from heaven above.”

The saints with clusters rich abound,
But all their fruit from Christ is found ;
For as a branch will barren be
If it abide not in the tree,
So all believers find it true
That they, alone, can nothing do ;
'Tis as in Jesus they abide
They thrive, and God is Glorified.

The boughs that in this Vine have root,
And bear the Husbandman some fruit,
He purges, for it is His will
To render them more fruitful still ;
Temptations, crosses, saints must share,
And trials, often hard to bear ;
But needful is the chastening rod,
That they may bring forth fruit to God.

Some seem to be in Christ, the Vine,
Yet of true life they give no sign ;

Leaves of profession they may show,
But, ah ! no fruits upon them grow ;
Although the Church they may deceive—
Dead, and yet having names to live—
The Husbandman well knows their state,
And they must wither, soon or late.

But the real branches from the Stem,
Who dwell in Christ, and Christ in them,
Can never perish while He lives,
For His own life to them He gives ;
So close the union is, and strong,
The powers of hell may struggle long,
But ne'er shall pluck—though all combine—
One living branch from Christ, the Vine.

AFTER HARVEST.

Thanks be to God ! the ripened corn
Is gathered in once more ;
The garners of our land again
Are filled with golden store.
Thanks be to God ! for His good hand
Hath been upon our fields,
'Tis through His wise and gracious care
The earth her produce yields.

Let favoured England now resound,
With hymns of praise to God,
For the welcome harvest, rich and good,
Just gathered from the sod.

He might have sent a famine sore,
But graciously, instead,
In His unerring Providence,
Has filled our land with bread.

While we enjoy the wholesome food,
Thus for our bodies given,
Let it remind us of the bread
Sent down by God from heaven.
This living bread is Christ Himself,
Who deigned His life to give,
That all who feed by faith on Him,
For evermore might live.

The Jews believed not Jesu's word—
Among themselves they strove,
When thus He spake—"I am the bread
That cometh from above."

So we shall doubt and murmur too,
Nor care on Christ to feed,
Unless the Spirit of the Lord,
Convince us of our need.

This bread is free for hungering ones,
Who nothing have to pay ;
No needy, waiting souls have yet
Been empty sent away.
Spirit of God ! work Thou in us,
May our petition be—
" Empty us, Lord, of self and sin,
Let us be filled with Thee."

ALL NEED SUPPLIED BY CHRIST.

If after heavenly good our spirits crave,
 Whatever be our need,
To Jesus let us go, for He can save,
 And make us blest indeed.

We are defiled with sin in every part,
 By nature all unclean ;
The utter depths of evil in the heart
 What mortal eye hath seen ?

But Christ's atoning blood can cleanse from sin ;
 His righteousness complete,
With the Almighty Spirit's work within,
 For heaven can make us meet.

We are but weak ; and fruitless is the thought,
 In spiritual grief,
Of ever leaning on ourselves for aught,
 To give secure relief.

But there is strength in Christ for those who faint,
 When help on Him is laid ;
'Tis in the weakness of each feeble saint,
 His strength is perfect made.

And we are poor ; nothing of nature's own,
 Can we to Jesus bring ;
The faintest sigh, desire, or humblest contrite groan,
 Must first from Jesus spring.

But thanks to God ! all fulness dwells in Christ—
The poor and needy go,
And richest Gospel blessings, all unpriced,
He doth on them bestow.

If we our coldness mourn—if we can feel
No heat of heavenly love ;
When prayers seem cold, and hearts appear like steel—
Still let us look above.

With warmth divine the Spirit of the Lord
Our spirits can inspire,
And, by the love of Jesus shed abroad,
Set our cold hearts on fire.

If we are dark, encompassed all around
With clouds of unbelief,
Striving in vain to pierce the gloom profound,
Jesus can give relief.

He is the glorious Sun of Righteousness—
His bright, celestial ray
Can heal and lighten, fructify and bless,
And chase all clouds away.

Oh may we then to Jesus boldly go !
And He, in His great love,
Will give us needed grace while here below—
And joy complete above.

A TEXT FOR THE NEW YEAR.

"For this God is our God for ever and ever : He will be our guide even unto death." PSALM XLVIII. 14.

This year is fading day by day—
Soon 'twill be gone, and that for aye ;
Say, is not this a glorious text
With which to enter on the next ?
" This God "—the meaning, O ! how wide—
His people's God—His people's Guide.

Their God before the worlds were made,
For then Salvation's plan was laid ;
To save the Church the Sacred Three
Agreed from all eternity ;
In Christ then chosen, seen, and loved,
From Christ His saints can ne'er be moved.

Their God who left His throne on high,
For them on earth to live and die ;
Who rose to reign and plead above,
Supreme in power and rich in love ;
Yet dwells in each believer too,
Working in them to will and do.

Their God for ever—truth most blest
To sinners who in Jesus rest ;
Though foes may rage and faith be dim,
Nothing can sever them from Him ;
For ever they with Him shall reign—
For ever freed from sin and pain.

Their Guide—whose strong yet gentle hand,
Shall lead them to the better land :
Their Guide to cheer, uphold, and bless,
To sympathize in all distress,
For He—sweet thought—their nature wore,
And trod life's rugged path of yore.

Their Guide to death : when near the tomb
His voice is heard amidst the gloom—
“ Fear not : beyond these shades of night
The golden city shineth bright ;
A few more steps, and thou shalt be
At rest eternally with Me.”

That we may greet the opening year,
With gladsome hearts, devoid of fear,
Lord, give to us Thy grace, we pray,
Enabling each in faith to say—
“ Thou art *my* God for evermore ;
Thou art *my* Guide till life is o'er.”

WAITING SERVANTS.

Many of God's dear children pass,
Through long affliction here ;
Victims of lingering disease,
They live from year to year.
Such may be tempted to exclaim—
“ Why are we left on earth ?
Why does the Lord prolong our lives,
That seem so little worth ?”

Afflicted ones, God knoweth best,
Then trust His wisdom great,
And bear in mind—" They also serve
Who only stand and wait."
One has to *do* the Master's will,
Another has to *bear* ;
Both are the servants of the Lord,
And both His favour share.

Patience must have her perfect work,
And graces must be tried ;
Ye may be in the furnace long,
But Jesus sits beside.
He, the Refiner, knoweth well
How great the heat should be ;
When His wise ends are all fulfilled,
He sets His people free.

If from the busy scenes of life,
Some child of God should turn,
To visit such afflicted saints,
Sweet lessons he may learn.
For often times he will behold,
Their heaven-born graces shine
So brightly, that his heart must bow
In praise of power divine.

And he will hear these Christians talk,
Of visits from their Lord,
When He has cheered their waiting souls,
With some consoling word.

The everlasting arms, they say,
Are underneath them placed,
And, by Christ's love, affliction's cup,
Is sweetened to their taste.

O sufferers ! yet a little while,
And ye shall reach your home,
Where sin and sorrow enter not—
Where sickness cannot come.
A little while, and ye shall be
Enclasped in Christ's embrace,
And gaze, without a veil between,
Upon His glorious face.

HEARTS OF FLESH.

Hearts of flesh, O Lord, we need,
Help us then with Thee to plead ;
To none other can we go,
Thou alone the work canst do ;
Take our stony hearts away,
Give us hearts of flesh, we pray.

Hearts of flesh to feel within,
Godly penitence for sin :
Broken, contrite hearts, O Lord,
We would offer—for Thy word
Tells us Thou wilt not despise,
Such an humble sacrifice.

Hearts of flesh divinely sealed,
That will glad obedience yield

To Thy precepts, and submit
Unto all Thou seest fit ;
Where Thy laws Thou wilt indite,
And engrave Thine image bright.

Hearts of flesh that shall aspire,
After Thee with strong desire ;
Mounting as on eagle's wings
Up to higher, heavenly things ;
Holding oft, communion sweet
At the hallowed mercy seat.

Hearts of flesh wherein Thy love,
By the gracious, holy Dove,
Shall be richly shed abroad,
Causing us to love Thee, Lord,
And to feel affection true
To the saints who love Thee too.

Hearts of flesh to trust alone
In the Father's darling Son ;
Leaving every stay beside,
Clinging to the Crucified ;
Trusting in His love and might,
Even in the darkest night.

Hearts of flesh where Thou, O God,
Wilt take up Thy blest abode ;
O amazing thought—to be
Inhabited by Deity !
'Tis for this that we would pray—
Lord, abide in us for aye.

THOUGHTS IN SPRING-TIME.

We have bidden farewell to the winter,
And now the fair spring-time is here ;
In the gardens, the fields, and the woodland,
Her beautiful blossoms appear ;
All over the wide-spreading landscape
Her bright smile of gladness is seen,
While the birds and the brooklets are singing,
And the trees put on garments of green.

Some troubled one may be exclaiming—
“ I know it is spring on the earth ;
But alas ! in my soul it is winter,
All darkness, and coldness, and dearth.
Though weeds I can see there in plenty,
No heavenly flowers will bloom ;
O Jesus, I long for Thy presence,
To banish the cold and the gloom.”

If this be a living desire,
Inwrought by the Spirit of God,
Then Jesus will surely fulfil it,
And winter will flee at His nod.
When the bright Sun of Righteousness rises,
And pours His warm beams on the heart,
It becomes like a garden in spring-time,
And coldness and shadows depart.

Then graces, like flowers, bloom sweetly,
Where before there appeared to be none ;
Faith, hope, and love show amidst others,
All turning their leaves to the sun.
The wild, barren desert of nature,
Can never give birth to such flowers ;
'Tis in the new heart they are planted,
And watered by heavenly showers.

Around these fair blossoms the Spirit
Breathes many a soft, divine gale,
Drawing forth all their delicate fragrance,
For Jesus Himself to inhale.
Ah, now the believer is joyful,
No doubtings his happiness dim ;
He rejoices in Jesus, and knoweth
That Jesus rejoices in him.

But soon he may lose all this gladness,
And be in a different frame ;
Yet, however his feelings may vary,
His Jesus is ever the same.
Here sin causes darkness and coldness,
And the pilgrim's head often is bowed ;
But Paradise, whither he hastens,
Hath sunshine with never a cloud.

THE LIVING, REIGNING SAVIOUR.

Written after reading meditations on the Office Characters of Christ, in
"The Gospel Standard."

The Saviour lives and reigns beyond the skies ;
Lord, bid vain thoughts begone,

And help us now this truth to realize—
Help us to muse thereon.

He lives as Prophet, His dear Church to teach ;
As Priest, to plead above ;
He lives as King of Saints, to rule o'er each
With the mild sway of love.

Nor this alone—for He, at God's right hand,
Sitting as King of kings,
Doth on His mediatorial throne command,
All persons and all things.

Then fear not, Child of God, when troubles fall,
Let this be understood—
Jesus is King, and He is working all
Together for your good.

'Tis in His people's nature now He reigns—
The very flesh that bore
Suffering and insult, and death's sharpest pains,
Liveth for evermore.

The very hands through which the nails were driven
With scorn and cruel mirth,
Now sway the sceptre ; unto Him is given
All power in heaven and earth.

Though sin and error rise like floods around,
The Saviour reigns, we know,
Else the wild waves would madly burst their bound,
And whelm the earth with woe.

The time will come—a glorious, peaceful time—
When all shall know the Lord,
When Christ the King shall be through every clime
Acknowledged and adored.

But now He reigns to raise from death in sin
Each chosen, blood-bought soul ;
To carry on His gracious work within,
And to complete the whole.

He reigns, to save from all their sins and foes,
The objects of His love ;
To bring them safe through all that may oppose,
Unto His home above.

Christ lives and reigns upon a throne of grace,
To hear and answer prayer,
To help and sympathize in every case,
His saints to Him may bear.

He reigns—His people's Head of life and health ;
God doth their needs supply
From out His fulness—glorious mine of wealth,
And fountain never dry.

All Jesu's gracious acts no pen can tell—
Crowds wait on Him each day ;
He heals their wounds ; He deigns their fears to quell,
And smiles their tears away.

O Lord, we want the sweet assurance given,
That Christ, exalted thus
As Prophet, Priest, and King in yonder heaven,
Lives, reigns, and pleads *for us*.

Cause us to feel that Jesus for our sakes,
His priestly office bears ;
That He with His "much incense" fragrant makes
Even our feeblest prayers.

May Christ as Prophet unto us be dear,
And may we take our place
Low at His feet, to learn of Him and hear
His words of truth and grace.

O be it ours in faith to say—"We know
For us the Saviour lives,
For as vine juices to the branches flow,
His life to us He gives."

And may we be assured that Jesus reigns
By feeling that within,
He by His Spirit rules, and puts in chains
Each inbred lust and sin.

If Jesus be our Prophet, Priest and King,
This thought may be enjoyed—
Satan is fettered, death has lost its sting—
Both virtually destroyed.

If we are Christ's, we'll bid with dying breath
Farewell to sin and pain,
And our glad souls, redeemed from endless death,
With Him shall ever reign.

“COME, LORD JESUS.”—

“COME, LORD JESUS.”—

Surely this prayer was breathed by saints of old,
Living amidst the shadows of the law ;
Of Christ the Psalmist sang, and prophets told,
The glories of His kingdom they foresaw.
He came, obeyed the law, fulfilled each type,
Died, and ascended to His heavenly home ;
But Jews, fast held in unbelief's stern gripe,
Are praying still—“Messiah, quickly come.”

“COME, LORD JESUS.”—

The seeking soul with earnestness cries out,
“Was it for me, O Lord, Thy side was riven ?
In mercy come and banish fear and doubt,
Say unto me, ‘Thy sins are all forgiven.’”
The Saviour comes at the appointed hour,
With sweet assurance then the soul is blest,
Feels the atoning blood applied with power,
And leans with joy on her Belovèd's breast.

“COME, LORD JESUS.”—

This prayer God's children often use again,
And look to heaven when troubles press around ;
“Lord, come to my relief, man's help is vain,
O let me prove from Thee my help is found.”

Jesus fulfils His troubled one's desire,
Sometimes at once He makes the trial cease;
If not, His arm supports through flood and fire,
And "I am with thee" fills the soul with peace.

"COME, LORD JESUS."—

By dying saints this wish is oft expressed,
When from the clay the soul would fain take flight:
"Come, Lord, and bear me to Thine endless rest,
To dwell with Thee in heavenly glory bright."
The Master comes: the weary body sleeps
To wake one day and in rare beauty rise;
The ransomed spirit with its Saviour keeps
A glad, eternal Sabbath in the skies.

"COME, LORD JESUS."—

The Church on earth prays now—"O Prince of peace,
Let Thy blest sway be felt throughout the world;
Let crime and error, strife and bloodshed cease,
And war's red flag for evermore be furled."
In person or in spirit Christ will come—
We may conclude from God's unchanging Word,
And earth will be a peaceful, happy home,
Filled with the knowledge of the glorious Lord.

THOUGHTS ABOUT CLOUDS.

How changeful are the clouds
That float o'er heaven's blue!
So bright at sunset hour,
So fair at sunrise too.

Sometimes like snow-white birds,
Across the sky they pass;
Anon, like mountains piled,
In many a gloomy mass;
As we behold the varied scene,
Some profit let us try to glean.

Perhaps we note a cloud,
Sailing along on high,
And when we look again,
'Tis vanished from the sky:
How blest the assurance given
To souls in fear and doubt,
That, like a cloud, their sins
By God are blotted out;
Jehovah's Word abideth sure—
"I will remember them no more."

At times, O child of God,
A darksome cloud will rise,
Concealing Christ, thy Sun,
A season from thine eyes.
Yet fear not, for ere long,
He will the darkness chase,
And shed again on thee,
His beams of love and grace:
In dark or light, His love to thee
Is changeless, endless, firm, and free.

Yonder gathering cloud,
Will send down welcome rain,
Refreshing earth's fair fields,
Her blossoms, fruits, and grain :
Christian, though trouble's cloud,
Now fills thy heart with gloom,
It may be charged with showers,
To make thy graces bloom ;
Each trial, by thy Father sent,
Works out some gracious, wise intent.

And sometimes when the sun,
Beams bright through nature's tears,
The bow, God's covenant sign,
Upon the cloud appears.
So troubled saints will see,
When Jesus sweetly shines,
The bow in each dark cloud,
Painted in glowing lines ;—
Jehovah's faithful, covenant love,
Which never shall from them remove.

A cloud received the Lord,
When He went up to heaven,
And to His chosen few,
This promise then was given—
“ Your Lord shall come again
As ye have seen Him go—”

To this God's people now
Are saying—"Even so :
With saints and angels—glorious crowds—
Come, Lord, come quickly in the clouds."

JESUS ONLY.

"He called my attention to sundry monuments, not the least attractive of which, both to him and myself, was an exceedingly neat gravestone, with this short, but significant heading—'Jesus only.'"—*Gospel Magazine*.

"Jesus only"—blessed word—
Fitting motto to record,
Where the true believer's clay,
Waits the resurrection-day.

Blessed dead, here laid to sleep !
Over him we need not weep,
If the Name above his dust,
Was his spirit's stay and trust.

"Jesus only" may have been,
Uttered in the closing scene,
Ere the happy soul took flight,
To the blissful realms of light.

Then this clay, when Christ shall come,
Will forsake its darksome home,
Changed and glorious, quit the sod—
Join its spirit—meet its God !

Do such thoughts support and cheer,
Those who laid their loved one here ?
Do they feel the peace of heart,
“ Jesus only ” can impart ?

“ Jesus only ”—on this Rock,
Fearless of the tempest’s shock,
Sinners helpless, vile, and poor,
May abide from harm secure.

All foundations else will fail,
When the storms and floods prevail ;
But the one that God hath planned,
Through eternity shall stand.

Lord, may “ Jesus only ” be,
Here our portion, trust, and plea,
That at death our souls may soar,
To exalt Him evermore,

THANKSGIVING SONG.

Again the harvest golden,
Just yielded by the sod,
Makes good the promise olden,
That Noah received from God.

For blessings so redundant
Our thanks we now would raise ;
God’s mercies are abundant—
Abundant be our praise.

His kindness who can measure ?
We see it at the first ;
He gave the seed—rich treasure—
That in His earth was cast.

He shaped the corn-blades slender,
He deigned each ear to fill,
And by His care so tender,
Protected them from ill.

He sent us the right weather—
Wind, sunlight, dew, and rain,
All sweetly worked together,
To benefit the grain ;

Man's strength and skill for sowing,
And harvest-labour too,
Were of the Lord's bestowing—
For which our praise is due.

And now the toil is over—
Our barns are filled with corn ;
May thanks unto Jehovah,
From hearts and lips be borne.

Let men of every station,
Unite in grateful songs,
For God has blessed our nation—
To Him the praise belongs.

THE TWO PILGRIMS.

“ Brother, the year is gliding fast away,”
One Christian pilgrim to another said ;
“ A few more weeks, and it will pass for aye—
How quickly have its days and seasons fled !”
“ True,” his companion with a sigh replied,
“ And it appears to me, on looking back,
That not one year in all my life beside,
Has left so much of sorrow on its track.

“ This year death stole my firstborn from my hearth,
Then I for weeks at his dark portal lay ;
While outward trials thronged around my path,
Dread foes within have vexed me day by day.”
“ I know,” his friend rejoined, “ that you have met
Great troubles lately, and your heart is bowed ;
But oh, my brother, let us not forget
The ‘ silver lining ’ to each gloomy cloud.

“ Your child is dead, but then your soul has cheer
In the sweet thought that she is with the Lord ;
And in your sickness was not Jesus near ?
Has He not spared your life, and health restored ?
In all your trials God hath some wise end ;
Strength and deliverance were by Him bestowed :
Let us not fail when looking back, my friend,
To mark the countless *mercies* on the road.

"Jesus has trod before this thorny path;
'Tis ordered by our Father wise and fond;
And what are all earth's woes to him who hath
The hope of an eternal heaven beyond?"
"My fault," the other said, "with shame I see;
Your words, my brother, are both true and kind;
Pardon my murmurs, Lord, and give to me
A truly thankful and contented mind."

WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR.

"Welcome to the new year!"
Methought a Christian sang,
As on the air of midnight
The merry church bells rang.
"The old year has departed,
With all its joy and grief,
In life's eventful volume
We turn another leaf.

"Welcome to the new year
Although I cannot see,
The trials and the sorrows,
That it may bring to me;
I know that God my Father
In love appoints them all,
His grace will be sufficient,
Whatever may befall.

“ Welcome to the new year !
The thought to me is blest,
That I am one year nearer
To my eternal rest.
Lord Jesus, help me ever,
To wait, and watch, and pray,
Expecting, Lord, Thy coming,
To call my soul away.

“ Welcome to the new year,
That ne’er shall have an end !
The age of joy eternal,
That I with Christ shall spend.
Nor sin nor sorrow enters,
That fair abode of bliss,
Where I shall be like Jesus,
And see Him as He is !”

“ HE SHEWED UNTO THEM HIS HANDS AND
HIS SIDE.”

(John xx. 20.)

We read how Christ, when risen from the tomb,
Appeared to those He loved,
Shewed them His hands and side, dispersed their gloom,
And all their doubts removed.

Jesus is now from mortal eyes concealed,
The veil we cannot lift :
Yet is He not unto His saints revealed,
Through faith, His precious gift ?

And there are some who cry, "Lord, give us faith :
We know that Thou hast died—
O make us feel our interest in Thy death,
Shew us Thy hands and side !

" And may the Spirit to our hearts reveal,
That they were pierced *for us* ;
Sacred emotions we should surely feel,
When gazing on Thee thus."

Yes ; then, from bosoms clouded now and cold,
Black unbelief shall fly,
While tongues unloosed, in faith divine made bold,
"*My* Lord ! *my* God !" will cry.

And O, what love in sinners' hearts will glow,
When first they have believed,
That Christ for love of them bore wrath and woe,
And cruel wounds received !

Before the Lord their spirits humbly bow,
The while their eyes grow dim
With tears of grief for sin, beholding how
Their sins have wounded Him.

Then do they know that on those hands, once bored,
Their names engraved abide,
And feel the virtues of the stream that poured
From out that piercèd side.

If saints are favoured here—what will it be
When heavenly bliss they gain,
And on the throne with open vision see
The Lamb that once was slain ?

SEED-TIME.

Seed-time is here, and brings to mind
The words of Christ the Lord,
Concerning one who went, to find,
And scatter seed abroad,
While some 'midst stones and thorns was sown,
Some by the wayside fell,
The rest on ground where it alone
Took root and flourished well.

Christ's servants now His Gospel sow,
Like grain upon the sod,
But it will only thrive, they know,
In hearts prepared by God.
Though long the seed may be concealed,
Yet after many days,
Some fruit divine 'twill surely yield,
To God's eternal praise.

This truth now comes to minds afresh—
A truth of import deep—
That if we sow unto the flesh,
Corruption we must reap.

In mercy, Lord, thy help bestow,
Let grace within us reign,
That we may to the Spirit sow,
And endless life obtain.

As we behold how in the ground
The seeds by myriads fall,
Doth not our memory linger round
Th' inspired words of Paul ?
He tells how each believer's clay,
Sown in corruption here,
Shall glorious rise at God's great day,
And like to Christ appear.

Oh wondrous change for bodies vile !
From sin and pain set free,
Joined to the soul, beneath God's smile,
To live eternally !
Then well may those Christ died to save
This glorious anthem sing—
“Where is thy victory, O grave ?
O death, where is thy sting ?”

THROUGH THE LATTICE.

SOL. SONG XI. 9.

Through the lattice of the law
Ancient Jews the Saviour saw ;

But those types and shadows dim,
Now have been fulfilled in Him,
And His sacred charms, we know,
Through the Gospel lattice glow.

When the holy Book is read,
And the Spirit's light is shed,
On the words of seer and sage,
Showing Christ in every page,
Saints delighted view their Lord,
Through the lattice of His Word.

And how blissful is the hour
When, with sacred, melting power,
The Beloved shows His face
Through the preached word of grace,
While His sweet and loving voice,
Makes believers' hearts rejoice !

Or when, gathered round the board,
In remembrance of their Lord,
His dear children feast in faith,
On the emblems of His death,
O how oft with grace divine
Christ will through the lattice shine.

And at other seasons, too,
Saints on earth their Saviour view.
Every glimpse a foretaste is
Of the glorious world of bliss,
Where the Church, redeemed by grace,
Sees her Jesus face to face.

THE LAMBS AND THEIR SHEPHERD.

(FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN A SERMON BY C. H.
SPURGEON, FROM ISAIAH XL. 11.)

Within the fold of Jesus,
How many lambs we find !
To these—His tender weaklings—
The Lord is ever kind.
The gift of God the Father,
For them the Shepherd died,
And now within His bosom,
They blessedly abide.

What infinite compassion,
What boundless love and care,
Is shown by Christ thus deigning
His little ones to bear !
How *near* they are to Jesus ;
He bids them not depart—
He does not put them from Him,
But has them near His heart.

Familiar, hallowed converse,
The loving Shepherd holds,
With the lambs that in His bosom,
He tenderly enfolds.
They tell to Him their secrets,
And Jesus tells them His—
O what on earth is sweeter
Than fellowship like this ?

And then such perfect safety,
Is in that bosom found,
For arms of love almighty,
The feeble lambs surround.
The foe must slay the Shepherd,
Or ever he can kill,
One lamb that in His bosom
He sheltereth from ill.

Are *we* Thy lambs, Lord Jesus—
The objects of Thy love ?
If so, then may it please Thee
The blessed fact to prove.
O may the lamb-like spirit,
Be visible in us,
And in the Shepherd's bosom,
May we be carried thus.

HOME.

All earthly homes with guilt are stained,
Since sin to Eden entrance gained,
And many a bitter pain and ache
The monster bringeth in its wake :
But there's a home (and Scripture proves)
Prepared for those Jehovah loves ;
Where they shall be released from sin—
And nought unholy enter in.

How many jarring notes there are,
The music of our homes to mar ;

Actions or words unkind will shroud
A household in a gloomy cloud.
But God's bright smile of love and grace
Beams ever in yon glorious place—
Beams on the family above,
Perfect in unity and love.

Sometimes the members of a home,
Widely apart are called to roam ;
Or death around our hearth may creep,
And we be left alone to weep.
But we are sure no parting word,
In Paradise is ever heard ;
No death, no pain, no sorrow there,
But life and bliss beyond compare.

How oft the Christian pilgrim longs,
To reach his home, to join its songs ;
The thought of that to which he hastes,
Sweetens the bitter cup he tastes.
He pants to realize that word
So sweet—"For ever with the Lord ;"
With Him and like Him—is not this
The substance of eternal bliss ?

JESUS THE HEALER.

When Jesus was on earth, disease and pains,
Were subject to His will ;
And now in heaven, where He in glory reigns,
He is the Healer still.

In healing souls what wonders Christ has done!
And all He does is free ;
While thus He speaks, " I will not cast out one
That cometh unto Me."

Poor sinners, vile and leprous, venture there,
And with His own rich blood,
He heals them all, and gives for garments fair
The righteousness of God.

Christ makes the deaf to hear His gracious voice,
And to obey it too :
He heals the blind, and O, how they rejoice
When they their Saviour view !

He makes the souls that were by nature dumb,
Sing of his power and grace,
The lame, the weak, that to His footstool come,
Hasten to His embrace.

Christ wounds all such whom He intends to heal,
But this is done in love ;
And every one that doth this wounding feel,
His healing power shall prove.

Other physicians wounded souls may try,
But they will useless be ;
Each, soon or late, to Jesus must apply,
For none can heal but He.

If for a time He answers not a word,
Yet let them send to heaven
More earnest cries, and wait upon the Lord,
Until the cure is given.

THE ROCK AND THE MOUNT.

SUGGESTED BY A PASSAGE IN "THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE."

A saint of threescore years and ten,
Upon the bed of death,
Was waiting for the moment when
He should resign his breath.
Oft sweetly smiling, he would say
To others of the flock,
"Not always on the mount I stay,
But always on the Rock."

Not always joyful in God's love,
But always safe in Him,
And this distinction Christians prove
To be no idle whim.
For sometimes on the mount they rest,
When they with Jesus meet ;
Recline by faith upon His breast,
And hold communion sweet.

While Jesus doth His love unfold,
And shows His hands and side,
They fain, like Peter once of old,
Would on the mount abide.
But overshadowing clouds arise,
And pilgrims must descend—
Through many a vale their pathway lies,
Before their journey's end.

But though thro' furnace and thro' flood
They may be called to go,
The souls that Jesus bought with blood,
Are always safe, we know.
On Christ, the everlasting Rock
They stand by sovereign grace,
Nor can the wildest tempest's shock
Remove them from the place.

The saints of God rejoice in this,
And bless Jehovah's love,
When on the mount they taste the bliss
Revealed to them above.
Safe in the arms of Jesus still,
When they to glory soar,
And on communion's holy hill
Abide for evermore.

FROM DEATH TO LIFE.

In holy Scripture's pages, how often have we read
How Jesus Christ the Saviour gave life unto the dead;
The ruler's little daughter, the widow's son of Nain,
And Lazarus of Bethany, He brought to life again.

All Adam's race by nature are dead, and cold, and still,
But Jesus lives in heaven, and quickens whom He will;
When He in love approaches, and bids the soul arise,
The dead show life and motion, and send forth earnest sighs.

As Christ of old commanded to give the damsel meat,
So all whom now He raises, have food divine to eat ;
For every true believer partakes of living bread,
And drinks of living water, as Christ Himself hath said

Oh, can we now discover some signs of life within ?
Are we earnestly desiring to be released from sin ?
Are we hungering and thirsting for Jesus' righteousness?
And, feeling our own weakness, do we cry to Him to
 bless ?

Such feelings come from Jesus, they evidence new life,
And with this life old nature will wage a constant strife ;
But the grace of God shall conquer, all glory to His
 name !

Though but a spark it seemeth, He fans it to a flame.

Yes, it is life eternal the sheep of Christ receive ;
'Tis thro' His death they have it, He died that they
 might live ;

Live here upon His fulness, and bring forth fruits of
 grace,

Live in eternal glory, and see Him face to face.

A HARVEST MEDITATION.

Now let our thanks be given to the Lord,
Who has again fulfilled His gracious word,
His solemn promise, that while earth remains,
The ripened corn each year shall deck her plains.

Our thoughts revert, as on the fields we look,
To many a passage in God's holy Book ;
And fancy paints that olden harvest scene,
When Ruth in Boaz' field went forth to glean.

Surely in Boaz we may plainly trace
A type of Jesus in His love and grace ;
He was a mighty man of wealth, we read,
And this of Christ the Lord is true indeed ;
He did not harshly send poor Ruth away,
But in his fields he kindly bade her stay ;
So Jesus welcomes all the poor and weak,
Who in the Gospel fields for treasure seek.

Boaz was near of kin to widowed Ruth,
And she became his wife ; so here the truth
Of union to the Lord in type is shown—
The glorious fact that saints with Him are one ;
Christ takes their nature and He gives them His—
How blest to have a kinsman such as this !
And more, the Church is Jesus' charming bride ;
He loved her so that in her stead He died.

O heavenly Boaz, may we hear Thy voice
Speaking to us and making us rejoice !
Lord, of Thy boundless wealth may we receive,
And evermore upon Thy fulness live !
O show to us that Thou art near of kin,
Our great Redeemer from death, and hell, and sin ;
Cause us to feel that Thou our Husband art,
That we from Thee shall never more depart !

AS LITTLE CHILDREN.

MARK x. 15.

Except as little children,
According to the Word,
We may not hope to enter
The kingdom of the Lord.
They who by grace are quickened,
And on the Lord believe,
Come, child-like, to His footstool,
His blessing to receive.

They come as little children,
To be washed from every stain
In the precious blood of Jesus,
That none have sought in vain.
They come that He may clothe them
In righteousness divine—
A garment that for ever
Shall bright and spotless shine.

They come as little children
To Jesus to be fed
With Gospel milk and honey,
With true and living bread.
They come that His good Spirit
May teach them every day;
Into all truth to lead them,
And help them to obey.

They come as little children,
That by their Father's hand
They may be safely guided
Unto the better land.
Though sometimes, when 'tis needed,
They feel the chastening rod,
They know their Father holds it—
Their wise and loving God.

When they unto the stature
Of men, in Christ are grown,
Still is the child-like nature
By true believers shown.
And all who through the Spirit
Can "Abba, Father," cry,
Are heirs of Jesus' kingdom,
And they shall reign on high.

"WE WOULD SEE JESUS."

JOHN xii. 21.

"We would see Jesus;" said the ancient Greeks,
When Christ as man was dwelling on the earth:
Thus even now the quickened sinner speaks,
Who longs for blessings of eternal worth.
Lord, warm our bosoms with celestial fire,
That we may use these words with strong desire.

We would see Jesus by the eye of faith,
As suffering, dying on the cursed tree,
And feel, as we behold, that by His death
He from our sin's desert has set us free.
O surely then our hearts in love would melt,
Sin would be hated and contrition felt.

We would see Jesus as our Priest above,
Our gracious King, our holy Prophet too ;
Of Him, in all His characters of love,
We want to have a realising view.
Lord, give us grace into Thine arms to fall,
Nought in ourselves, in Thee to find our all !

We would see Jesus as of old the bride
Gazed on His matchless beauties and adored ;
"Chiefest among ten thousand," then she cried,
"And altogether lovely is my Lord."
We fain would see Him thus, adoring bend,
And call Him our Beloved and our Friend.

We would see Jesus in His glorious place,
Exalted on the throne at God's right hand ;
See Him as our Redeemer, face to face,
In the clear brightness of Immanuel's land.
Lord, grant to us to view Thee here by faith,
That we may so behold Thee after death !

DIVINE DRAWING.

By nature sinners roam,
And hate the Saviour's law ;

No man to Christ can come,
Except the Father draw :
And this blest influence from above
Results from everlasting love.

The Father draws the soul,
From creature-righteousness :
The best robe, fair and whole,
Becomes the sinner's dress :
When drawn to Jesus crucified,
His filthy rags are cast aside.

From sin the Father draws,
Its love and practice too,
Though still the saint has cause
Indwelling sin to rue ;
But though it *lives* and causes pain,
Through grace divine it does not *reign*.

God draws from worldly things,
From earth's vain, paltry toys ;
All new-born souls have wings,
And soar to higher joys :
In Jesus all their wishes meet—
They find in Him their joy complete.

Thus drawn to Christ's embrace,
Such favoured ones shall have
From Him all needed grace—
Glory beyond the grave !
Lord, draw us now with cords of love,
And fix our hearts on things above.

THE DOUBTING CHRISTIAN AND HIS LORD.

CHRISTIAN.

O Lord, another year is opening now,
And at Thy throne with heart depressed I bow ;
I cannot see the future, but I fear
That heavy trials may be mine this year.

JESUS.

Why so dismayed, poor soul ? If rough thy way,
Strength shall be given equal to thy day.

CHRISTIAN.

The thought will come (a grieving thought, alas !)
What if grim death should o'er my threshold pass ;
And steal a blossom from my household bower ?
How could I stand in such a trying hour ?

JESUS.

If I see fit bereaving strokes to send,
'Tis from thy Lord and from thy heavenly Friend.

CHRISTIAN.

Sickness may seize me—then I cannot tell
Who would provide for those I love full well ;
Cold, biting poverty, alas ! might come,
And render desolate my happy home.

JESUS.

Look unto Me, My child, whate'er betide,
Jehovah-Jireh surely will provide.

CHRISTIAN.

But, Lord, it may be this will be the year
When I must die, and that last foe I fear.
How shall I do when heart and flesh shall fail ?
How shall I struggle with the monster pale ?

JESUS.

I will be with thee then, the victory give,
And bear thy spirit with Myself to live.

CHRISTIAN.

Lord, 'tis enough—my unbelief I see,
Forgive my sin, teach me to trust in Thee,
Assured that Thou, my Helper hitherto,
Wilt be my Helper all my journey through—
Wilt give me every day sufficient grace,
Till I in glory view Thy lovely face.

LIGHT, GLADNESS, JOY, AND HONOUR.

ESTHER viii. 16.

Light, gladness, joy, and honour
The Jews of old obtained,
When Esther for them pleaded,
And her petition gained.
But, in a sense more glorious,
These blessings are made known,
To those who love the Saviour,
And trust in Him alone.

When Christ, the Sun eternal,
Is shining on his path,
What joy of heart and gladness
The true believer hath !
And all earth's greatest honours
Are nought compared with this—
To walk with God as children,
And heirs of endless bliss.

But o'er the pilgrim's pathway
A gloomy cloud may come,
Nor is he always joyful
While he is going home.
But let him cross death's river,
And touch the heavenly shore,
Light, gladness, joy, and honour
Are his for evermore !

'Tis light without a shadow
That gilds yon sacred hills,
And lasting joy and gladness
The ransomed spirit fills.
Each world-despised believer
Shall there receive a crown,
And share immortal honour
With Christ upon His throne.

"I AM JOSEPH YOUR BROTHER."

(SUGGESTED BY A SERMON BY MR. JOSEPH IRONS.)

Thus Joseph spake, but here we see
In type a greater One than He.
"I am your Brother," Jesus saith,
To all that seek to Him by faith ;
And oh, what joy the sinner feels
When thus the Lord Himself reveals !
Eternal union is made known,
And pardoning love and mercy shown.

'Twas Joseph, whom his brethren sold—
A dreadful crime of sinners bold !
But have not Jesus' brethren done
Far worse to Him, God's equal Son ?
Saith the believer—" This is true,
For by my sins my Lord I slew."
Surely the heart, when this is felt,
In godly penitence will melt.

But freely Joseph did forgive,
And bade his brethren near him live ;
" Mind not the stuff " was his command—
" Yours is the good of all the land."
Unto His brethren Christ has given
The gospel land, a pledge of heaven :
The closer they can live with Him,
The more the world they disesteem.

Joseph possessed abundant store,
With which to feed his brethren poor;
Freely he gave it, putting back
The money in each brother's sack.
All fulness is laid up in Christ
For His dear brethren, all unpriced;
He will their every need supply,
Nor slight the weakest suppliant's cry.

Christ in His brethren's nature lives,
To them His sympathy He gives,
And, reigning on the heavenly throne,
Is not ashamed His kin to own.
"I am your Brother!"—oh, that we
Our interest in this truth may see!
Lord, speak to us these words of cheer,
And bid us to Thyself draw near.

JESUS TO THE CHURCH.

SONG ii. 14.

My dove, My undefiled, by sovereign grace
Hid in the Rock, safe in God's secret place,
The Bridegroom of thy soul speaks from above—
Let Me behold thy countenance, My love;
Turn not away, confessing "I am black,"
For in My sight thou dost no beauty lack.

Although by nature thou art black indeed,
And nought of good thou hast in self to plead,

Remember I have washed thee in My blood,
And clothed thee with the righteousness of God;
Though black in Adam, thou art fair in Me—
Fair with the comeliness I put on thee.

The graces of My Spirit, all divine,
About thy cheeks like rows of jewels shine,
And gleam upon thy neck like chains of gold;
No spot in thee, My fair one, I behold:
Then let Me see thy face, thine accents hear—
Sweet is thy voice unto thy Bridegroom's ear.

Sweet is the voice of those I love, when they
Are first enquiring after wisdom's way:
The Holy Spirit teaches them to cry:
Sweet are their prayers, yea, sweet their every sigh;
And sweet to Me are the backslider's moans,
When he, returning, his transgression owns.

Sweet is thy voice, when songs of praise ascend,
Or when in prayer thou callest on thy Friend;
And oh, how sweet will be thy voice to Me,
When My whole church from earth and sin set free,
Around the throne of glory shall proclaim
Eternal praises to Jehovah's name!

THE CHURCH TO JESUS.

SONG ii. 14.

Jesus, my Lord, it melts my heart to hear
Thy gracious words; to Thee I would draw near,

And humbly own, while prostrate at Thy feet,
That unto me *Thy* voice, my God, is sweet ;
Sweeter than all the music earth can bring,
One word from Thee, my Lover, Friend and King !

Sweet was Thy voice when for the chosen seed
Thou didst in covenant pledge Thyself to bleed :
Sweet was Thy voice to pardon, heal, and cheer,
When sojourning in human nature here :
Sweet was Thy voice when nailed upon the tree ;
Sweet is Thy voice that pleads on high for me.

Sweet is Thy voice that tells the soul its guilt
Is pardoned, through Thy blood on Calvary spilt :
Sweet is Thy voice in every promise given,
To stay the soul while passing on to heaven :
Oft, my Beloved, let me hear Thy voice,
Stilling my fears, and making me rejoice.

And O that Thou wouldst oft in love afford
A glimpse of Thy fair countenance, my Lord !
Fairer Thou art than all the sons of earth ;
Yea, such Thy beauty, such Thy matchless worth,
That when my spirit hath a sight of Thee,
All earthly things seem but as dross to me.

And if it is so blest at times by faith
To view my Lord, and list to what He saith,
What will it be to see Him face to face,
And hear His voice in yonder glorious place,
Where nought can ever come my joy to dim,
Or interrupt my fellowship with Him.

CHRIST IS RISEN.

Christ is risen—words of cheer !
Blessed news the angels gave
To the women filled with fear,
Standing by His empty grave ;
“ Come,” the heavenly voices said,
See the place where He was laid !”

Christ is risen—He appeared
Afterwards to those He loved :
Tenderly their hearts He cheered,
And their unbelief reproved ;
Till at length they saw their Friend,
In a cloud, to Heaven ascend.

Christ is risen—this was shown
By the Spirit shed abroad,
When the fiery tongues came down
On the followers of the Lord.
All the Spirit's workings prove
That the Saviour lives above.

Christ is risen—thus we see
How His work is fully done ;
From the grave God set Him free,
He accepts His well-loved Son ;
Christ removed His people's sin,
Righteousness for them brought in.

Christ is risen, to prepare
For His saints a place on high ;
" Many mansions," bright and fair,
Wait for them beyond the sky ;
Every ransomed one shall come
To his place in yonder home.

Christ is risen as a King,
Victor over all His foes ;
Large requests His subjects bring—
Larger gifts their King bestows ;
Soon His foes beneath His feet
Shall confess His sway complete.

Christ is risen as a Priest,
For His people pleads above ;
Yes, He bears them—e'en the least—
Ever on His heart of love ;
And their every prayer and sigh
Jesus will present on high.

Christ is risen—and He wears
His dear brethren's nature still ;
He can understand their cares,
Sympathize in every ill.
Tried one, to His footstool go,
Christ can feel for human woe.

Christ is risen—and ere long
He will surely come again,

With the bright angelic throng,
And the saints, a blissful train ;
Oh, that we through grace may be
In that glorious company !

Christ is risen as the Head,
When He cometh from the skies,
All His members from the dead
In His likeness shall arise ;
And, according to the word,
Be for ever with the Lord.

LINES.

FOUNDED ON "A DREAM" BY CHRISTMAS EVANS.

Methought I saw amid the gloom
Four mighty men at Lazarus' tomb ;
To give him life they fain would try ;
And said the first, " I will apply
The salt of duty, which will prove
That Lazarus can both live and move."

So vigorously, his end to gain,
He rubbed the corpse, but all in vain ;
He ceased—another took his stand,
A scourge of threatenings in his hand,
With which he dealt full many a stroke,
But Lazarus neither stirred nor woke.

“ Make way for me,” exclaimed the third,
And then melodious notes I heard.
“ Wake, thou that sleepest, wake ! ” he sang,
And through the tomb soft echoes rang ;
But though his “ pipe ” sweet music gave,
There was no “ dancing ” in the grave.

Then said the fourth, “ All means, I know,
Are vain alone—to Christ I’ll go,
The Resurrection and the Life ;
One word of His with power is rife.”
Soon at the grave the Lord arrived,
And at His voice the dead revived.

Let all who preach the Gospel word
Have confidence in Christ the Lord ;
And let this be their prayer of faith,
“ Come from the winds of heaven, O breath !
Spirit Divine, thine influence give—
Breathe on these slain, that they may live.”

THE THREE GARDENS.

PART I.—EDEN.

’Twas in a garden, broad and fair,
That our first parents dwelt ;
Before the tempter entered there,
No pain or grief they felt.

In perfect purity they stood
At first, but how they fell
By eating the forbidden food,
The Scriptures plainly tell.

God's voice was heard at cool of day
In Eden's calm retreat,
Then midst the trees they hid away
Afraid their Lord to meet.
Jehovah's eye pierced through the gloom,
And soon, with guilty shame,
Our parents heard the righteous doom
That from their Maker came.

They left the garden of the Lord,
To suffer and to weep,
While angels stood with flaming sword,
The tree of life to keep.
Oh, let us not forget that we
Are sharers in the fall,
Born with the Lord at enmity,
And under Satan's thrall.

Yet with man's sentence, dark indeed,
Some cheering words were said ;
God promised that the woman's seed
Should bruise the serpent's head.
How great His mercy ! Adam's race
All merit endless hell,
But millions, through His sovereign grace,
Shall in His glory dwell !

PART II.—GETHSEMANE.

To sacred, lone Gethsemane
We would in thought repair,
And with the spirit's vision see
The suffering Saviour there.
His followers are in slumber bound,
(E'en Peter with the rest),
While Jesus kneels upon the ground,
With agony opprest.

Oh, who can tell the anguish sore
Of His most righteous soul,
That causes sweat through every pore
Like drops of blood to roll !
He fears the cup, the wrath of God,
That He must drink alone,
Yet cries, while prostrate on the sod,
" Father, Thy will be done."

But see, among the olive-trees,
The gleam of spear and sword ;
An armed band is come to seize
The unresisting Lord.
The traitor Judas at their head
Steps forward to betray,
And like a lamb to slaughter led,
Jesus is led away.

Yes, led away to die for all
The loved and chosen seed,
Ruined and lost in Adam's fall ;
Ah, this was love indeed !
Lord, as we see Thy grief and smart
In sad Gethsemane,
Oh may Thy Spirit to the heart
Whisper " It was for *thee*."

PART III.—JOSEPH'S GARDEN.

Jesus, the Crucified, was laid
In Joseph's garden-tomb ;
Till the third day, as He had said,
He slumbered in its gloom :
Then, ere His loving followers came,
The Lord forsook His prison,
Leaving the angels to proclaim—
" He is not here, but risen."

While Mary in the garden stayed,
Troubled, perplexed, and sad,
The gracious Lord appeared, and made
Her mournful spirit glad.
What kind and tender words were those
That Christ to Mary spake !
Telling of union firm and close,
No power can ever break.

Jesus has bruised the serpent's head,
And passed into the skies ;
And since He rose, so from the dead
His saints to heaven shall rise.
From guilt and condemnation free,
Believers now may sing—
“ O grave, where is thy victory ?
O death, where is thy sting ?”

These garden scenes of long ago,
Lord, may we oft recall,
And may the Holy Spirit show
Our interest in them all ;
That while our nature-state we view,
Our lost and ruined case,
We may behold our interest too
In Christ's redeeming grace.

LORD'S DAY MORNING.

Another day of rest is dawning now—
The saints its coming greet ;
How many at this time in spirit bow,
God's blessing to entreat !

Some through the week have been perplexed no doubt,
With this world's care and din ;
They long to be to-day from earth shut out,
And with their God shut in.

The Lord's ambassadors this morning seek
Unto their Master's throne,
Asking that He would deign through them to speak,
And this day's labours own.

"O gracious Lord," they cry, "Thy blessing give,
While we Thy truth proclaim;
Refresh Thy Zion; make the dead to live;
And glorify Thy name."

Many of God's dear children are detained
From public means of grace;
Some lie this morning, weary, weak, and pained,
But Jesus knows each case.

Ye suffering ones, while with the gathered saints
Your loving Lord will meet,
He can be with you too, soothe your complaints,
And grant communion sweet.

O may you feel Him near! and if no more
God's earthly courts you tread,
In glory soon you will your Lord adore,—
All pain for ever fled!

These days of rest are blessed earnest given
Of that glad time to come,
When all the saints of God shall rest in heaven,
Their everlasting home!

THE TWO SENTINELS.

(FOUNDED ON FACT.)

One evening, years ago, two soldier-friends
As sentinels were stationed, at the ends
Of a long passage-way, or sally-port,
Leading to Spain, from strong Gibraltar's fort.
On both these men the Spirit of the Lord
Had deigned to work, as they perused the Word;
One had a sense of pardoning love within,
While yet the other felt his load of sin.

That night the former, as he watched alone,
And mused on glorious things to him made known :
The other while returning to the fort
At quiet midnight, found him deep in thought ;
He asked the watchword, when in accents grave
The sentinel this solemn answer gave—
“ The precious blood of Christ ! ” so much was he
Absorbed in sweet and sacred reverie.

The man, to self-possession soon restored,
Gave the right watchword—but his gracious Lord
Clothed the first words with mighty power, as they
Were borne on air along the passage-way,
And fell upon the other sentry's ears,
As he was watching, filled with guilt and fears.
“ The precious blood of Christ ! ” sweet was the sound
To that poor soul, in sin's hard fetters bound.

He heard, and in that hour his chains were riven,
Through Jesus' blood he felt his sins forgiven,
And lived to serve Him long in lands afar—
So wonderful Jehovah's dealings are !
May we remember that the "precious blood"
By which these soldiers were brought nigh to God,
Still as a stream of sovereign virtue rolls,
To cleanse and heal polluted, wounded souls !

UNQUENCHABLE LOVE.

"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."
Song viii. 7.

In feeble numbers how can we
The love of Christ set forth ?
Eternal, sovereign, firm, and free,
How matchless is its worth !
A love that was in covenant seen—
A love that brought Him down
From glory's throne, to die for men—
A love no floods could drown.

What angry, raging waters rose
Around the Son of God,
When as the Man of griefs and woes,
This earthly ground He trod !
Mark how temptation foams and raves
Against His spotless soul—
How persecution's threatening waves
About His pathway roll.

And oh, how terrible at last !
The floods how deep and dread !
When wrath Divine like billows past
O'er Christ the Surety's head.
Through many waters Jesus came,—
They could not quench His love ;
And still, a changeless, deathless flame,
It fills His heart above !

So Love to Christ in every saint
Burns as a sacred fire,
And though 'tis often low and faint,
It never can expire.
Temptations, unbelief, and sin,
Like water-floods may rise :
But where God kindles love within,
It never, never dies !

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Oh what a solemn night was that,
When, at the feast divine,
Jesus with His disciples sat,
And gave the bread and wine ;
“ This do in memory of Me ”—
The words seem echoing yet,
As round the board to-day we see
The Lord's dear children met.

The wine poured out, the broken bread,
Bring to the mind again
The precious blood of Jesus shed,
His body bruised and slain.
Happy partakers, who by faith
Their suffering Saviour view,
While to each heart the Spirit saith—
“ He groaned and bled *for you.*”

Now to obey their Lord's command,
His saints may boldly meet,
But once they felt, in this our land,
Fierce persecution's heat.
By moonlight then, or break of day,
The followers of the Lord
Met in the woods to praise and pray,
And hear His sacred word.

There sometimes on a grassy mound
They placed the bread and wine,
And kept in secrecy profound,
The ordinance divine ;
Then homeward through the forest trees
Each went his way alone ;
Oh that in Britain, times like these
May never more be known !

This feast on earth the pilgrim cheers,
When Christ the Lord is there,
When through the lattice He appears,
The altogether fair.

Then think, believer, what 'twill be
To feast with Christ above,
When all the church His face shall see,
And celebrate His love !

“THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS, AND
EATETH WITH THEM.”

LUKE XV. 2.

So did the Scribes and Pharisees exclaim,
In proud derision of the blessed Lord,
When publicans and sinners round Him came,
And listened gladly to His sacred word.
“This man receiveth sinners.” And we know,
'Tis true this day as when Christ dwelt below.

“This man”—how much is in these words contained !
How wonderful the love and mercy shown,
When, to redeem His people, Jesus deigned
To take their human nature to His own !
And now upon the heavenly throne He reigns,
Still He is man and feels for human pains.

“This man receiveth sinners” such as we,
And thus He speaks, to banish fear and doubt—
“All that the Father gave shall come to Me,
And him that cometh I will not cast out.”
At Jesus' feet no sinners need despair,
For sovereign grace hath surely brought them there.

Jesus receives them, to forgive and bless,
With His own blood to cleanse from every sin ;
To make them by His grace and righteousness
Comely and fair—"all glorious within."
The shoes, the ring, and the best robe He gives
To every prodigal whom He receives.

"And eateth with them"—O what wondrous grace !
Christ hath a table bountifully spread,
And all who come to Him find there a place,
Yea, by the King they are to banquet led ;
And then He eateth with them, while above
Floats the broad banner of eternal love.

Since Christ receiveth sinners, O may we,
Drawn by the Spirit, come as vile and poor,
To have from Him salvation full and free,
And life divine that shall for aye endure ;
That we may know how precious is his love.
Here upon earth and in the world above !

A PRAYER.

(Written during the prevalence of the cattle plague.)

O God, in this our land,
Thy judgments are made known—
Teach us to own Thy hand,
And bow before Thy throne.

We see our cattle fall,
And feel that they are Thine ;
Our sustenance, our all,
Comes from Thy hand divine.

Our nation guilty is,
And well deserves the rod ;
Lord, we acknowledge this,
Yet spare us, gracious God.
Oh that in heart we may
Lie prostrate in the dust,
Beseeching Thee to stay
The visitation just.

The nation's heart is stirred,
And with a double fear,
The cholera, we have heard,
Is hovering darkly near.
But Thou canst save, we know,—
Lord, suffer not again
That cruel, dreaded foe
To fill our land with pain.

Thy saints, through woe or weal,
Are in Thy mighty hand ;
Oh, grant to us to feel
That *we* thus safely stand.
The Lord as King doth sit—
Before Him we would fall,
And unto Him commit
Our lives, our souls, our all !

LEAVEN AND HONEY.

LEV. ii. 11.

(FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN A TRACT.)

Two things we find excluded
By God's commanding word,
From offerings that shadowed
The death of Christ the Lord.
No luscious honey gathered
With much of toil and care,
Nor yet offensive leaven
Might ever mingle there.

Both were alike forbidden ;
And did not this make known,
That man for his salvation,
Must trust in Christ alone ?
Nor sin nor creature service,
The acid nor the sweet,
Can be allowed to mingle
With Jesus' work complete.

Christ is the Lord's anointed,
The bread by God supplied ;
A sacrifice most fragrant
To those for whom he died ;
For by *Himself* once offered
He took away their sin,
And righteousness eternal
For all His Church brought in.

The saints, God's royal priesthood,
Upon this offering feed ;
Oh may we be partakers,
And find it meat indeed !
Lord, from all self-dependence
In mercy set us free,
And help us, weak and sinful,
To rest alone in Thee.

THE BELIEVER'S STANDING.

Long ere the starry heavens were spread,
God's people stood in Christ their Head :
Chosen in Him by sovereign grace,
No power can move them from their place.
E'en when they fell with all the rest
Of Adam's race, they still possessed
In Christ a standing most secure,
Which shall for evermore endure.

Though sin hath made them black and vile,
In Christ they have Jehovah's smile ;
For in His righteousness and blood,
They stand before the holy God.
While in this world believers stay,
Earth, hell, and sin obstruct their way ;
But in the armour God bestows,
They stand against their mighty foes.

Sometimes in Satan's artful snares
The saint is taken unawares ;
Yet though he fall, he shall arise,
And thus to God he humbly cries—
“ Lord, I am weak ; I cannot stand,
Unless upheld by Thy right hand ;
O let me not Thy name disgrace,
But keep me in each slippery place.”

Christians who fall are bruised and pained,
They get their garments sadly stained ;
And bitterly their conduct rue,
As David did, and Peter too.
But though they fall and suffer much,
God's power and faithfulness are such,
And His dear saints He loves so well,
That none shall ever fall to hell.

No, they who trust in Christ the Lord
Shall never perish, saith the word :
They shall stand firm in God's great day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away ;
Yea, stand on high where Jesus is,
In perfect everlasting bliss :
In Christ ere time began to be,
In Christ to all eternity !

SPRING FLOWERS.

Once again the spring is here—
Lovely season of the year !

Waking out of winter sleep,
From the ground the flowerets peep ;
Every one, so frail and fair,
Telling of Jehovah's care :
May the blossoms spring-time brings
Lead our thoughts to higher things.

Some are growing, wild and free,
In the woods, on hill and lea ;
These recall what Jesus taught,
With respect to anxious thought.*
Poor believer, wherefore fear ?
Think upon His words of cheer—
God, who clothes the flowerets wild,
Will provide for you, His child.

On the graves we now may find
Blossoms bright, that bring to mind
How the same Almighty power,
That awakes each slumbering flower,
Will one day, with trumpet sound,
Call the dead from 'neath the ground ;
May we then, through grace divine,
In the Saviour's likeness shine !

To the dust our spirits cleave—
Lord, from Thee we would receive
Sovereign grace, to make us rise,
Like the flowerets, towards the skies.

* Matthew vi. 24-34.

Earthly things engross the mind—
Lord, our fettered souls unbind ;
Raise them from this heavy clod
Into fellowship with God !

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

(Founded on a passage in "The Christian Sentinel.")

Ere Sebastopol was taken,
A heavy Russian shell
In a hill outside the city
Was buried when it fell ;
And as it fell it opened
A spring before unseen,
And a fountain bubbled upward—
A pleasing sight, I ween.

For while the siege continued,
Its waters sweet and clear
Supplied in rich abundance,
The allies stationed near.
The missile that the foemen
Had meant to strike them dead,
Was made a welcome channel
Of life and health instead.

God's providence o'er-ruling
In this was clearly seen,
And the exercised believer
A lesson here may glean :

His trials may be many,
While he is going home,
And from a hostile quarter
They may appear to come.

But in these things, O Christian,
Thy Father's ends are wise ;
Each trial hath within it
A blessing in disguise :
And God can cause affliction,
That seems with mischief rife,
To yield thee springing waters
Of comfort, health, and life.

LOSING ALL.

(FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN "THE SOWER.")

A godly merchant one day reached his home,
With anxious heart, by trouble overcome ;
Failure in trade his earthly hopes had crossed,
And bitterly he cried, " My all is lost."
His loving family around him stood,
To give him consolation if they could :—
" *All* lost ?" his good wife said, in tones of cheer,
" I still am left ; your children, too, are here.

" And then, my husband, you possess your health,
A greater boon than mines of golden wealth."
" And, father dear," the little children cried,
Pressing more closely to their parent's side—

"You have your hands to work, and eyes to see,
And we will try how useful we can be."
Then tenderly their loving mother strove
To raise her husband's thoughts to things above.

"You have your God," she said, "your Helper nigh;
Your every need He surely will supply;
You have his promises, so sweet and sure,
And heaven to go to when this life is o'er."
"May God forgive me;" then the merchant said—
"I have not lost my all, though wealth has fled:
What is the gold of which I am bereft,
Compared with all these blessings that are left?"

Though in their place earth's riches useful are,
Yet there are other things more precious far;
A child of God can never lose his all,
For though a thousand evils may befall,
And all his worldly wealth may pass away,
His heavenly treasure never can decay.
But if the soul is lost, 'tis very sure
We lose our all, and that for evermore.

ON THE DEATH OF E.W.D.

AGED FIVE MONTHS.

Another babe is gone—
The treasured, only boy,
Around whose cradle shone
Bright hope, and love, and joy.

How sudden is the blow ;
 Its bitter pain, alas,
Those hearts alone can know
 That through such trials pass.

In life and health *one* day,
 And ere the *next* had fled,
The precious darling lay
 Numbered among the dead.
Just one short winter here,
 And then his soul took wing,
To dwell in heaven's bright sphere,
 In "everlasting spring."

"O death !" the parents think,
 " Why comest thou again,
To break another link
 In this our household chain ?
Why does thy shadow dark
 Twice o'er our threshold fall,
While other homes, we mark,
 Thou enterest not at all ?"

But ah, we know that death
 Is under God's control ;
And sweet it is when faith
 All cares on Him can roll.
How blest to rise above
 Sharp sorrows such as this,
To trust a Father's love,
 And learn the rod to kiss.

E'en in this bitter cup
There is some sweetness given—
Oh mourning ones, *look up* ;
Your children are in heaven !
Bought with the Saviour's blood,
And of the Spirit born ;
They are at rest with God—
For them we need not mourn.

Ye would have joyed to keep
Your bright, beloved flowers ;
But think what evils creep
Around all earthly bowers.
Better it is, by far,
That they should bloom above ;
Where safe from ill they are,
Where all is light and love.

Oh, it seems hard to lay
Down in the earth's dark breast,
This precious form of clay,
So beautiful in rest !
But though it moulder there,
'Twill surely rise again,
The Saviour's image bear,
And in His glory reign.

Oh, what a happy case
If *all* this household band,
Shall meet at last, through grace,
In yonder better land !

There with the ransomed throng
For ever to abide,
And join the blissful song—
“Worthy the Lamb that died !”

“THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS.”

II. TIM. ii. 19.

He knoweth them, for long ere time began
Their names were written on Jehovah's heart ;
In all the blessings of salvation's plan,
Each of the chosen family had part—
The wondrous love of the Eternal Three
Was fixed on them from all eternity.

He knoweth them when in their nature state,
Knowing Him not, they run the downward road ;
He watches o'er them in His mercy great,
Before His Spirit is on them bestowed—
Preserves their lives from death, their souls from hell,
His wonderful forbearance, who can tell ?

He knoweth them, and all the way they take
Is known to Him—He watches them in love ;
In all their trials He will not forsake,
But bring them safely to their home above ;
Where they shall know even as they are known,
And reign with Christ their Saviour on His throne.

THOUGHTS AT THE CLOSE OF 1866.

The year is going, silently and fast,
Soon, very soon, 'twill sink into the past ;
Lord, help us to remember all the way
That Thou hast led us since last New-year's day :
To mark, as we review the chequered road,
Unnumbered mercies by Thy hand bestowed—
Mercies all undeserved, so rich and free,
Received too oft without a thought of Thee.

We have had trials, and some gloomy hours,
When buffeted by dark Satanic powers ;
But thou, O Lord, hast brought us through it all,
And here we humbly at Thy footstool fall,
Owning Thy hand ; and owning too with shame,
How we dishonoured Thy most holy name,
By vile rebellion and ingratitude,
Returning evil for Thy boundless good.

Ah, one year's sins viewed in God's holy light,
Would make our spirits sink in endless night ;
But, Lord, Thy grace our stubborn hearts must melt,
Or penitence for sin will ne'er be felt.
Oh let us feel that Jesus' precious blood,
Drowns all our sins as in a mighty flood ;
Oh cleanse us, melt us, that our lips may raise
To Thee a New-year's song of heartfelt praise.

Yes, soon another year on us will dawn,
But over it a veil is closely drawn ;
We cannot see the future—God alone
Can read its page—to Him all things are known.
Lord, help us then to take Thee for our Guide,
Fit us by grace for all that may betide ;
Oh may we be prepared to live or die—
To serve Thee here, or dwell with Thee on high.

A MOTTO FOR THE NEW YEAR.

"Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Psalm lxxiii. 24.

The year has swiftly flown ;
Another opens now ;
Before the heavenly throne,
We would like David bow ;
Beseeching Thee to guide us, Lord,
By Thy good Spirit and Thy word.

Our feeble mortal eyes,
The future cannot see ;
But Thou, O God, art wise,
And all is known to Thee :
Then may Thy grace our hearts prepare
For all we have to do or bear.

A loving, faithful Guide
God to His people proves ;
For on His heart abide
The names of those He loves ;
The least He never will forsake,
But all His saints to glory take.

How truly blest are those
Who trust His mighty arm !
Whatever may oppose,
He shields from every harm !
And if they stumble, slip, or fall,
His hand will raise them at their call.

Sinful and weak are we ;
O guide us, Lord, we pray ;
Our Friend and Helper be,
Until life's latest day.
Yea, guide us here, and afterward
Receive us into glory, Lord.

Blest " afterward ! " how sweet
It sounds in pilgrims' ears,
Who oft, with weary feet,
Press on through changing years ;
Who, while on earth, are called to bear
Much of temptation, grief, and care.

Cheer up, poor aching heart,
With pain and sorrow pressed,
Nearer one year thou art
To thine eternal rest ;
And God will give throughout thy way
Sufficient grace for every day.

Though heavy thou mayst deem
The trials of this state,

Yet oh, how light they seem
Compared with glory's weight—
The blessed, glorious "afterward,"
Eternity with Christ thy Lord !

ST. CROSS HOSPITAL.

(Founded on the portion for December 5th, in Spurgeon's "Morning by Morning.")

In this our land there still exists
A hospital, 'tis said—
St. Cross its name—where all who ask
Receive a dole of bread.
This brings to mind how Christ the Lord
A hospital hath built—
'Tis at His cross on Calvary,
Where once His blood was spilt.

Over the door we find engraved,
" Ask and it shall be given ; "
There all who knock are freely fed
With living bread from heaven.
And at this hospital a bath
Of wondrous worth we see—
It cleanses sinners from their stains,
However black they be.

Yea more—a wardrobe here is found,
So that each naked soul,
Thus washed in blood, may be arrayed
In garments fair and whole.

There too is kept a goodly store
Of weapons sharp and bright,
And armour strong for all who wish
In Jesus' name to fight.

Oh, who can count the blessings free
That Christ on Calvary gained !
By every soul that seeks His door
An entrance is obtained ;
Yea, all who knock as sinners there
Shall endless mercies have
While here on earth, and endless life
With Christ beyond the grave !

NOT ALONE.

“ Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.” John xvi. 32.

How sweet the words ! from Jesus' lips they came,
When, as the suffering Man, He dwelt below ;
And His dear children often use the same,
As through this world on pilgrimage they go.

“ Yet I am not alone,” the saint can say,
Though friends forsake, and trials may abound ;
His Father's presence lights the thorny way,
From God his comfort and his help is found.

“ Yet I am not alone,”—again 'tis said,
When low the Christian lies in weary pain—
The Father's hand in sickness makes his bed,
He gives relief when human help is vain.

Yes, e'en when passing thro' death's chilling tide,

“ Yet I am not alone,” we hear him sing ;

For there his loving Father is beside,

And through the flood He will to glory bring.

But ah ! sometimes the Father's face is hid,

Lonely and sad the Christian then will be ;

And he, mistaken, cries as Zion did,—

“ God hath forsaken and forgotten me.”

Believer, once thy Lord was left alone,

When stretched upon the cross, for thee to die,

When from His heart burst forth that bitter groan—

“ Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani ?”

Ah, thou canst never know the anguish dread,

The utter loneliness of Christ thy Lord,

When God forsook Him, suffering in thy stead,

And righteous vengeance on His spirit poured.

'Tis for thy good thy Father hides His face,

His loving smile will beam again on thee ;

Ere long—blest thought—in yonder heavenly place,

With Him in glory thou shalt ever be.

ADOPTION.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

A family, both large and poor,

Quitted their native land

To seek a home across the seas,—

But ere they left the strand,

A rich man with the travellers met,
And was so much impressed
With one sweet child, that very soon
The parents he addressed.

"I have no wife or child," he said,
"And *one* you well can spare;
Oh let this girl my daughter be,
My lonely home to share."
They questioned her—she gave consent,
And soon, most strange to say,
The parents yielded, left their child,
And travelled far away.

She in the rich man's home grew up
To womanly estate,
Most kindly reared, but yet her heart
Was filled with yearnings great.
"I somewhere have a father, sure,"
Was her abiding thought,
Till she at length with tearful eyes
Her benefactor sought.

"My father you are not," she said,
"Although so kind to me;
I have dear parents far away,
With them I long to be,
And I must go"—and so she went
Across the ocean wild,
Happy when clasped within their arms,
A loved and loving child!

So here we see, with all his care,
Man never can bestow
The loving spirit of a child—
With God it is not so.
The spirit of adoption comes
From His bright throne on high,
To dwell within His children's hearts,
And "Abba, Father," cry.

"I have a Father in the skies"
The Christian feels within,
And presses on, with yearning heart,
Through this dark world of sin.
Though with His loving presence here
Sometimes in spirit blest,
He longs to reach his Father's home,
And in His bosom rest!

THE CHILD'S QUESTION.

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN "THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE."

An aged Christian mourned each day,
Because her Lord had called away
The loved companion He had given,
Who trod with her the path to heaven
For many a year—now forced to part,
Keenly her spirit felt the smart,
Alas! she could not kiss the rod,
Nor bow before the will of God.

A little grandchild marked her grief,
And longed to give her some relief ;
Close to her side at length she crept,
And asked the mourner why she wept.
“ I weep, my darling,” she replied,
“ Because your grandpapa has died.”
The little one seemed grave awhile,
And then looked up with loving smile :

“ Yes, he has gone, I know,” she said,
“ But, grandmamma, is Jesus dead ?”
“ No, Jesus lives ” was the reply—
“ Then, grandma’ dear, why should you cry ?”
Simple the speech, yet every word
The widow felt as from the Lord,
Took the reproof therein conveyed,
And her rebellious grief was stayed.

And not reproof alone was given,
But comfort from the God of heaven ;
“ Sweet thought to me,” the widow said,
“ My heavenly Husband is not dead ;
Though death has snapped earth’s closest tie,
Still Jesus lives and reigns on high,
To be my sympathizing Friend,
My Guide and Helper to the end.”

O child of God, though death remove
Thy dearest friends, yet look above—
Christ ever lives to aid and bless,
To sympathize in thy distress ;

And if thy loved ones live with Him,
Why should thine eyes with tears grow dim ?
For they are blest, and thou ere long
Shalt join with them the heavenly song.

AT THE END OF THE YEAR.

Backward we look along the year,
Now that its end is drawing near,
And we can see how all the way
Is marked by mercies every day.
But yet while we are favoured thus,
How dull we are ! Lord, shine on us,
And warm our hearts, that they may be
Inflamed with gratitude to Thee.

We look around—on either hand
Dark clouds seem gathering o'er the land ;
The love of many waxes cold,
And error rears its frontlet bold ;
But, blessed thought, God reigns above,
The all-wise God, whose name is love,
And things now little understood
Are working for His people's good.

Forward we look—the future lies
Concealed from our poor mortal eyes :
O Lord, may it be ours to know
That we are Thine, that we may go

Calmly the unknown year to meet,
And firmly grasp the truth so sweet,
That whether dark or light it prove,
'Tis ordered by our Father's love.

Upward we look to heaven and pray
For guidance on our future way ;
O Lord, Thou knowest well our case,
Give us each day all needed grace :
May we to Thee our way commit,
And yield to all Thou seest fit ;
O be our Helper and our Friend,
And guide us to our journey's end.

THE AFFLICTED CHRISTIAN.

CHRISTIAN.

Lord, look on me, my days are spent with grief,
My spirit sinks beneath affliction sore ;
Oh, that Thou wouldest give me quick relief ;
Oh, that these days of pain and woe were o'er !
Doubt in my heart arises—can it be,
Afflicted thus, that I belong to Thee ?

JESUS.

Hush, hush thee, child, for sure a child thou art,
And this affliction is thy Father's rod ;
If thou didst never groan beneath its smart,
Thou mightest question being born of God :
Bend thou thy knee before thy Father's throne,
And thank Him that He leaves thee not alone.

Fine gold thou art in thy Jehovah's eye,
And great furnace-heat doth thy fine gold require
To purge it from the dross ! But I sit by
As the Refiner to control the fire ;
And when My image clearly shines in thee,
Then from the furnace I will set thee free.

Thou art a branch in Me, the living Vine,
My Father is the Husbandman, and He
Pruneth the branches with a wise design,
That richer clusters may adorn the tree ;
Sharp is the pruning thou art bearing now,
That thou mayest be a green and fruitful bough.

CHRISTIAN.

O Lord, forgive my murmuring, doubt, and fear,
Help me to bear the rod, the fire, the knife,
Work thou Thy will in me, but be Thou near,
My strength and Guide along the way of life ;
Till I through grace these light afflictions leave,
An endless weight of glory to receive !

LINES,

FOUNDED ON A FACT RELATED BY MR. J. B.
M'CURE.

A Christian lady, caught in Satan's snare,
Was tempted sore, brought almost to despair ;
" The Lord has cast me off," she murmuring said,
" The courts of Zion I no more can tread."

And so at length, shut up within her room,
She passed her days in loneliness and gloom.

Strict were the orders the domestics had,
That no one should approach the mourner sad :
A minister one day passed through the place,
Heard with great interest of the lady's case,
And after much persuasion and delay,
Gained leave to see her, just a word to say.

" Friend," he began, " if I have heard aright,
You feel assured that God has left you quite."
" Yes," she replied, " mine is a bitter cup,
Certain I am the Lord has given me up."
" Then," said the minister, " I counsel you,
Give up the Lord, with Him have nought to do."

The lady started, struck as with a sword,—
" Give up my Jesus, my most precious Lord !
Nay, though He slay me, I will trust in Him."
And as she spoke her eyes with tears grew dim ;
The snare was broken that had held her long,
And grievous mourning turned to joyful song.

Oh, let each one who moans in trouble sore—
" The Lord has me cast off for evermore ;"
Think, can I give Him up ? thy heart saith " No,"
Thou lovest Jesus still and this will show,
That Jesus loved thee first, and surely He
Will keep thee now and through eternity.

IN TIME OF DROUGHT.

O Lord, we pray, send rain upon our land—
The thirsty earth is longing for the showers ;
The fields are brown and dry on either hand,
Parched by the heat of long, bright summer hours ;
Oh that Thou wouldst send refreshing rains,
To clothe with emerald grass the hills and plains.

We know from what we see around us now,
How we depend on Thee, Almighty God ;
And to Thee as a nation we would bow,
And own that we deserve Thy chastening rod ;
But with Thee there is mercy, Lord, we know,
And, we beseech Thee, now Thy mercy show.

Yea, Thou dost show it—sounds of “harvest home”
Ring through our land ; our barns are filled with store,
And dost Thou not command the showers to come,
E’en while we ask, the precious pledge of more ;
Lord, we would trust Thee—Thou wilt surely give
Needed supplies, that man and beast may live.

Send rain also upon our hearts, O Lord,
For they in hardness do the earth surpass ;
Oh, that the Spirit’s influence might be poured
Upon our souls, like showers upon the grass ;
That by Thy gracious power they might be
Softened, revived, and bring forth fruit to Thee.

How many of the churches we behold,
 Dull, languishing, and as but half alive ;
 Oh, send a plenteous rain, Lord, as of old,
 That they may be confirmed, and grow, and thrive ;
 Work for their Lord with zeal, and boldly fight
 Against their foes, strong in Jehovah's might.

AN APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION.

"Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; serving the Lord."
Romans xii. 11.

To be diligent in business is commanded in the Word,
 For grace to keep the precept, we would look to Thee,
 O Lord ;

To us on earth are given certain duties to fulfil,
 Oh, help us to discharge them according to Thy will.
 Lord, in our daily calling may we act as in Thy sight,
 Avoiding what is evil, and striving for the right ;
 And while preserved from slothfulness, oh, keep us from
 the snare
 Of cold, absorbing worldliness, and over-anxious care.

To fervency of spirit the man of God exhorts—
 Thou knowest, Lord, how cold we are, how earth-bound
 are our thoughts ;
 Oh, can it be the coldness of spiritual *death* ?
 Breathe on us, Lord, we pray Thee, with Thine
 Almighty breath ;

And with Thy love, so wonderful, set our cold hearts on
fire,
That we may mount on wings to Thee of love and strong
desire ;
Lord, let Thy grace within us burn, a pure and heavenly
flame,
And make it our most earnest wish to glorify Thy name.

Lord, next we read of serving Thee—again we need to
cry
For grace to serve Thee here below, with singleness of
eye ;
Oh, let us feel that we are now from Satan's bondage
freed,
And willing made to serve Thee, Lord, wherever Thou
shalt lead.
And all we do, as Scripture saith, whatever it may be,
Lord, may we do it heartily, not unto men, but Thee.
But we are sinful—all our works will need the cleansing
flood ;
Oh, wash us and our services in Jesus' precious blood.

Ah, there's a blissful region, where round th' eternal
throne
The saints of God are resting, all sin and care unknown ;
They rest, yet are not idle—with perfect love and zeal
They serve their gracious Father, and never weary feel.
Rejoice then, Christian toiler, for thou ere long shalt be
Amongst that happy multitude, from earth and sin set
free ;

And all that mars thy services, o'er which thou
mournest now,
Shall be felt and feared no longer, when glory crowns
thy brow !

LINES,

FOUNDED ON AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF BERNARD
GILPIN.

When Popish Mary ruled our land,
Years back, with iron rod,
And laid her persecuting hand
Upon the church of God ;
How many men, and women too,
Firm by the Gospel stood,
And rather than be found untrue,
Would seal their faith with blood.

With those who thus maintained their ground,
By grace made strong and bold,
Was Pastor Bernard Gilpin found—
On whom the law laid hold :
But he, while men were taking him
To London to be tried,
Fell from his horse and broke a limb,
And so was laid aside.

Suffering he lay, when by his bed
His persecutors stood,
And one remarked " You oft have said
That all things work for good

To God's dear children ; and you own
That you are one of His,
Yet here with broken leg you groan ;
What can you think of this ?"

" 'Tis meant for good," the saint replied,
" This is not sent in vain,"
And so it proved, for Mary died
Ere he was well again.
The persecution then was stayed,
And Bernard, it appears,
Was in the church most useful made,
Through his remaining years.

This teaches us how surely God,
Will order all things well,
And brings to mind the Popish rod
That on our fathers fell.
How sad that England in these days
Should so caress the foe,
That caused the martyr-fires to blaze
In Smithfield long ago !

WHAT WILL THE NEW YEAR BRING?

What will the new year bring ?
Is questioned by many a heart,
As silently into the past
We see the old year depart.

'Tis gone with its joys and griefs,
Gone with its hopes and fears ;
Quickly its hours have fled,
And now its successor appears.

What will the new year bring ?
Mercies from God to all ;
Mercies, each day we live,
Loudly for praises call.
And oh, may the year to us
Bring blessings of nobler sort,
Of life, salvation, and peace,
From heaven's most holy court.

What will the new year bring ?
Changes and trials, no doubt,
For chequered with light and shade
Is the path for man marked out.
Grant, Lord, that if sorrows come,
They all may be sanctified,
And in the distressing hour,
Teach us in Thee to hide.

What will the new year bring ?
Death, we are sure, to some ;
And oh, how solemn the thought,
The summons to us may come.
Lord, by Thy grace, we pray,
Prepare us to live or die ;
Fit us to serve Thee here,
Or dwell in Thy home on high.

What will the new year bring ?
'Tis well that we cannot see
What lies in the future for us,
How gloomy or bright 'twill be.
Lord, help us in Thee to trust,
We pray Thee to be our friend,
And guide us through all the year,
Yea, even till life shall end.

THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

"To whom coming," I. Peter ii. 4.

In days of old what crowds to Jesus came,
To hear the holy lessons that He taught ;
Thousands He fed—He healed the blind and lame,
The deaf, the sick, yea, all that healing sought ;
Freely He wrought on each a cure complete,
Nor turned away one suppliant from His feet.

Jesus is living still, the sinner's Friend,
The same, though reigning on the heavenly throne ;
Still thousands come to Him—He will attend
To all poor souls that at His footstool groan :
Sin's wounds He heals—feeds and instructs them too,
Yea, all they need Jesus will freely do.

"Alas," saith one, "I ne'er shall taste His grace,
He answers not, though I so long have prayed."
Hush, hush, poor mourner, Jesus knows thy case,
For some wise end the blessing is delayed :
The Father draws no soul to Christ in vain,
Thou, in His time, an answer shalt obtain.

All through their lives believers need to be
Coming to Jesus every day and hour ;
Who can supply, console, and guide, but He,
Or give them strength against the tempter's power ?
They find in Jesus all that they can need,
A fountain full, a treasure-house indeed !

How blessed when the souls that Christ had bought,
By death set free, from earth to Him take flight ;
The journey ended, and the battle fought,
The Master calls them to His home of light ;
And soon their bodies too, we rest assured,
Will rise to be for ever with the Lord.

“WHAT IS YOUR LIFE ?”

JAMES iv. 14.

What is your life ? So swiftly pass our years,
That Holy Scriptures say
'Tis like a vapour, that awhile appears,
Then vanishes away.

Death, the great reaper, under God's command,
Is busy every hour ;
All ages, all degrees, in every land,
Must fall beneath his power.

We cannot tell how long *our* lives will be—
Death may be very nigh ;
Bless us, O God, with saving faith in Thee,
Fit us to live or die.

Let us remember, death is not the end,
'Tis but the door, we know,
By which to endless glory we ascend,
Or sink to endless woe.

And yet how mortals toil—poor, blind, and weak,—
As though this world were all !
But for God's grace, not one His face would seek
Upon this earthly ball.

But grace in some a mighty change has wrought,
God trains them for the skies :
What is your life ? Ask of the Spirit-taught,
And sweetly he replies—

“ This life is fleeting—yet a precious boon
By God my Father given ;
For Him I fain would spend it, knowing soon
Its bonds will all be riven.

“ But thanks to God, within this soul of mine,
I feel a life far higher—
The life of God—He lit the spark divine,
Which never can expire.

“ But when earth-life is done, it shall expand
In yonder world above,
To life eternal in the better land
Of glory, light, and love !”

THE HARPS UPON THE WILLOWS.

PSALM cxxxvii.

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN A SERMON BY MR.
LEACH.

Israel sat, when taken captive,
Weeping by the river-side :
“ Sing to us the songs of Zion ”
Mockingly their captors cried.
“ See, our harps hang on the willows,”
Answered then the mournful band,
“ How can we such songs be singing
In this strange and heathen land ?”

The believer, while he journeys
Through this world of sin and care,
Often has his time of sorrow,
Sometimes sinking in despair.
Sins, temptations, trials vex Him,
While the Saviour hides His face ;
Then his harp hangs on the willows,
And he mourns his grievous case.

But, sweet thought, the harp's not *broken*,
Though upon the willows hung ;
Cheer thee, Christian, to its music
Happy songs may yet be sung.
Sorrow lasts but for a season,
Thou shalt soon see brighter days,
And with joy re-tune thy harpstrings
To thy dear Redeemer's praise.

And remember this, believer,
When thy griefs seem long and sharp,
Soon in yonder heavenly mansions
Thou shalt have a golden harp ;
Never hung upon the willows,
Always perfect in its tone,
Fitted for the songs of praises
Thou shalt sing before the throne.

WHAT WILL OUR CHILDREN BE ?

What will our children be ? Fond parents oft
This question ask with mingled hope and fear ;
We watch them as they lie in slumber soft,
And wonder what will be their life's career.

Mere earthly good for them we would not crave,
But this desire arises in the mind,
That they may grow up gentle, wise, and brave,
Comforts to us, a blessing to their kind.

Upon the parents much depends, we know,
For as the twig is bent so grows the tree ;
Wisdom and grace, O Lord, on us bestow,
That we may train them, looking unto Thee.

Much we may do, but cannot change their hearts,
These are by nature sinful, dark, and vain ;
And such will be, till God His grace imparts,
And they, by power Divine, are born again.

O gracious Lord, we pray that Thou wouldst give
To each dear child a new and heavenly birth ;
Thy sovereign grace bestow, that they may live
To glorify Thy name upon the earth.

But as we muse, this thought will also come—
They may be called away in infant days,
Called to be angels in the Saviour's home,
To join in songs of everlasting praise.

Deeply it pains the loving parent's heart,
To think of losing a life just begun ;
O help us, Lord, if called from them to part,
Humbly to say, " Father, Thy will be done."

Our little ones are treasures Thou hast given,
Yea, rather, *lent* to us—Thine may they be ;
If they should die, Lord, may they rest in heaven,
And if they live, O may they live to Thee !

AMONG THE TREES.

'Tis pleasant in the summer-time to tread
The woodland still and green,
Where leafy boughs lace thickly overhead,
And sun-rays glance between.

All things around proclaim the skill and power,
And providence of God,
From the bright orb above us, to the flower
That blossoms on the sod.

As on we walk, fanned by the murmuring breeze,
We think how in God's Word,
His children dear are oft compared to trees—
The planting of the Lord.

Planted by Him, His name to glorify,
They live and bring forth fruit ;
Unlike our trees, they neither fade nor die,
For heavenly is their root.

Like a fair fruit-tree 'midst these trees around,
So 'midst the sons of men
The Church saw Christ of old, and He is found
As precious now as then.

Shelter and food divine each soul receives
That comes beneath His shade,
And more than this, finds healing in His leaves
For wounds that sin has made.

In Paradise above, the Scriptures tell,
This tree of Life doth stand,
No sword before it—free to all who dwell
Within that glorious land.

May it be ours while here on earth, to come
By faith beneath this tree,
And then enjoy the fruits in yon blest home,
Throughout eternity !

LINES

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN A SERMON BY MR. CHILD.

A child of God lay on the bed of death ;
His wife beside him watched his labouring breath ;
He clasped her hand and raised his drooping head—
“ Jesus, my Lord,” he softly, sweetly said,
“ Has been my hiding and my dwelling-place,
And soon, I trust, through rich and sovereign grace,
In yon bright world, from earth and sin set free,
Jesus for aye my resting-place shall be.”

Yes, Jesus is the glorious hiding-place,
Of all who thro’ the Spirit feel their case
So bad, that law and justice must condemn,
Except the Saviour freely shelter them.
And He is found, while on the earth they stay,
Their hiding-place in every trying day ;
When sorrows rise, or strong temptations pain,
They flee to Him, and never flee in vain.

And Jesus is His people’s dwelling-place—
In Him ere time began thro’ sovereign grace,
They all in time obey His word divine—
“ Abide in Me, as branches in the vine.”
It is through thus abiding that they give
Fruit unto God, and to His glory live !
And, sacred thought, while thus they dwell in God,
He dwells in them, and sheds His love abroad.

Jesus the Lord a resting-place is found
By all His saints upon this earthly ground ;
In spirit here upon His breast they lean,
And find a rest most sacred and serene ;
If this is sweet, what will it be above,
To see His face, enjoy in full His love,
Where not a foe can enter to molest,
Or break the perfect, everlasting rest !

THOUGHTS AFTER ILLNESS..

I thank Thee Thou hast spared me, gracious Lord ;
That from the bed of weakness and of pain
I am raised up, in health to walk abroad,
And look upon earth's loveliness again.

Yes, I am spared—oh, may it be for this,—
To be a monument of love divine,
And by the Spirit's power to taste the bliss
Of knowing I am Christ's and He is mine.

Spared once again to take my wonted place
Amidst the busy scenes of life on earth ;
Help me in daily life, Lord, by Thy grace,
To live to Thee, and prove a heavenly birth.

I am restored, while others round me lie
Still weak and helpless, suffering sick and sore ;
And spared, while others have been called to die,
And by the place that knew them, known no more.

Musing on this, the searching thoughts will come—
How if in this affliction I had died?
Where would my soul have been? With God at home?
Or down where darkness and despair abide?

Prepare me, Lord, for life or death, and deign
To give me grace to use the inspired words—
“For me to live is Christ, to die is gain :
Whether I live or die, I am the Lord’s.”

LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A MINISTER
OF THE GOSPEL.

The summons to glory has suddenly come ;
Another dear servant of God has gone home ;
While speaking of Christ and the rest that remains,
His soul is released, and that rest he obtains.

He rests as a soldier—the conflict is done,
Through Jesus, his Captain, the victory’s won ;
To him now are given the crown and the palm,
He rests with his Saviour in heaven’s blest calm.

He rests as a mariner—yes, he has crossed
The ocean where oft-times his bark has been tossed ;
And now he is safe on the heavenly shore
Where tempests and billows shall try him no more.

He rests as a labourer—one who has wrought
For Christ in His vineyard, nor laboured for nought ;
His day’s work is ended for Jesus below—
He rests where sweet pleasures eternally flow.

He rests, yet still serveth—God's people above
Are ever employed in His service of love ;
There nothing can enter that service to mar,
So holy, so blessed the glorified are.

Death is coming, dear reader, to you and to me—
We know not how sudden or soon it may be ;
Our souls then will rise to a heavenly throne,
Or sink to the regions where rest is unknown.

But should God's good Spirit enable us here
To rest upon Jesus, we need not to fear ;
For all those who trust Him and taste His free love,
Shall rest in His bosom in glory above.

THOUGHTS IN WAR TIME.

Here, in our peaceful England,
We have been filled with pain,
To hear of foreign battles,
And men by hundreds slain.
To read of pleasant corn-fields,
That ripe for harvest stood,
Turned into fields of slaughter,
Deluged with human blood.

We turn with grief from viewing
The evils sin has done,
And raise our hearts' petitions
To God, the Holy One.

We praise His name for keeping
Our island-home in peace,
And pray He would in mercy,
Make foreign war to cease.

But should it long continue,
Be this well understood ;
Jehovah for His children
Makes all things work for good.
We cannot see the future,
God knows and governs all ;
May we have grace to trust Him,
And at His footstool fall.

How blessed when the nations
Shall learn to fight no more.
When Jesus' peaceful kingdom
Shall reach from shore to shore !
Swords turned to rustic ploughshares,
To pruning-hooks the spears ;
The thoughts of such a season
Our drooping spirit cheers.

There is a holy warfare
Believers have to wage,
With world, and flesh, and Satan,
All full of deadly rage.
But Jesus to His people,
Gives armour for the fight ;
Though weak themselves, they conquer
Through Christ their Captain's might.

Are you, through grace, dear reader,
A follower of the Lord ?
Then you must wear His armour,
And wield the Spirit's sword.
Although the fight be trying,
The promised rest is sure,
Sweet rest in heavenly mansions,
With God for evermore.

THE STORM AND THE SWORD.

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN "OLD JONATHAN."

Around the ship the tempest roared,
The sky was draped in gloom,
While one brave officer on board
Sat calmly in his room ;
But, by his side, a loving wife
Inquired with terror pale—
"Do you not fear the tempest's strife ?
My heart begins to fail."

The husband then his glittering blade
Quick pointed at her breast ;
"Tell me, my wife, are you afraid ?"
Then smiling she confessed—
"No, for my *husband* holds the sword :"
"So winds and waves," he said,
"Are held by my all-gracious Lord ;
Why should I quail with dread ?"

Christian, when trials round thy soul,
Like angry tempests rise,
They all are under God's control,
Thy Father, kind and wise.
Thy heavenly Husband holds the sword
That seems about to kill,
And be thou sure thy loving Lord
Will never do thee ill.

The storm that gathers round thy way
Shall not destroy thee—no :
'Twill separate thy chaff, and lay
Each lying refuge low.
The sword to thee no harm shall work,
Though it may cause thee smart,
By slaying idols dear, that lurk
Like traitors in thy heart.

By thee the trials in thy path
May not be understood,
But God in each a purpose hath,
And worketh all for good ;
Ere long where sorrows are unknown,
In glory's clearer light,
Thy heart with rapture sweet shall own—
“ My Father's way was right.”

FAREWELL TO 1870.

Farewell, old year ! thy days are going fast,
Soon thou wilt die, and sink into the past ;

And as we backward look thy course along
Unnumbered mercies call for grateful song.

But ah, what sad events have marked thy way—
What scenes of slaughter since last New Year's Day!
And men are asking—What can these things mean?
Surely God's judgments in the world are seen.

Across the seas, alas, the earth is red
With blood of thousands by their fellows shed;
Scenes of distress appear on every hand,
For war, that fearful curse, is in the land.

How many cries ascend unto the Lord,
That He would give His peace-commanding word;
But if still longer He must use the rod,
We would be still and know that He is God.

We fear and tremble when we look at home,
Lest upon us the rod of God should come,
For we must humbly own that all around,
Errors and sins unceasingly abound.

Yet are we favoured by the God of heaven,
And peace—sweet peace—to England still is given;
Lord, hear the prayers of those who trust in Thee—
Pardon our sins—keep us from bloodshed free.

This fearful war the Christian's bosom pains,
But soothing is the thought—Jehovah reigns,
And out of all this evil He can bring
Good to His saints and glory to their King.

Lord, keep and guide us through another year,
And should it be, Thy coming draweth near,
Oh, grant to us Thy plenteous grace, we pray,
That we with joy may meet the last great day.

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

Alas ! how sharp and sudden is the blow,
That we by God have just been called to bear ;
The wife and mother is by death laid low,
The loved one that her friends so ill could spare.

But yet we know Jehovah's ways are right,
Wise are His ends, though hidden from our eyes ;
Oh may the mourners, now in sorrow's night,
Be helped to trust in God, the only wise.

The sorrowing husband and the children dear,
How they will miss her tender care and love !
In their affliction, Lord, wilt Thou be near ?
And grant the trial may a blessing prove.

Oh may they find in Thee a Friend indeed,
Loving, Almighty, and at all times nigh ;
A Friend who can supply their every need,
A Friend indeed who cannot change or die.

And grant that we, the living, each may lay
This solemn, sad removal much to heart ;
Since none can tell how near may be the day,
When death shall bid *our* souls and bodies part.

But Lord, we know Thy sovereign grace alone
Can fit us for a home beyond the sky ;
Oh that Thou would'st in us that grace make known,
That we may be prepared to live or die.

GROWTH.

'Tis sweet to see around us,
In spring and summer time,
Trees, plants, and flowers growing
From early bud to prime ;
To mark the corn advancing
From tiny blade to ear,
The vine put on its verdure,
And tender grapes appear.

We look upon our children,
And love to see them grow,
From infancy to manhood,
And signs of vigour show ;
For if in mind and body
We could no progress see,
We soon should feel persuaded
That something wrong must be.

Believers are exhorted,
In God's most holy Word,
To grow in grace and knowledge
Of Jesus Christ the Lord ;

But some amongst God's children
Scarce seem to grow at all ;
They need the Spirit's fulness
Upon their hearts to fall.

Sometimes God sends affliction
His people to revive,
And blessed are the sorrows
That make them grow and thrive.
Oh Lord, on all thy weak ones
Thy bounteous grace bestow,
That they unto the stature
Of men in Christ may grow.

LINES,

FOUNDED ON A FACT RELATED IN "OLD JONATHAN."

A lady, one who loved the Lord,
Within her chamber prayed
That God would deign to show her how
She might be useful made.
When on her mind it was imprest
That she must go and see
A widow, who was living near,
In lowly poverty.

Some candles she must take with her—
How strange the mission seemed !
Some bread or meat, the lady thought,
Would be more useful deemed.

But, heeding the impression given,
Her way she quickly made,
With candles and some other gifts,
The widow poor to aid.

She found her rising from her knees,
In poverty and gloom ;
They scarcely could each other see,
So darksome was the room.
“ I just have prayed,” the widow said,
“ That God would send a light ”—
And when a candle was produced,
Her aged face grew bright.

“ I have a Bible here,” she said,
“ Large print—’twas lent to me ;
But I could not, without a light,
Its sacred pages see ;
But now my Father, by your hands,
Has well supplied my need ;
How kind and gracious is the Lord,
My humble prayer to heed !”

Her friend replied, that sent by God
She to the cottage came ;
And they together joined in praise
To His most holy name.
Thus we behold how God the Lord
Indites and answers prayer ;
And how His well-loved people may
Each other’s burdens bear.

LINES ON MY FATHER'S DEATH.

Yes, he has gone ! The soul has left the clay ;
One dying struggle, and it upward soared,
Upon the morning of God's holy day,
To spend an endless Sabbath with the Lord.

His life on earth is done, that once was spent
In work for God amidst His vineyard band ;
The life in which of late he underwent
Severe affliction from his Father's hand.

His Father's hand, all wise, all loving too,
For some good end prepared the bitter cup,
And surely He, the long affliction through,
Sustained His child until he drank it up.

We know not all that passed within his breast,
Not long ago a season sweet was given,
When he, with peace and happiness possest,
Seemed lifted almost to the gates of heaven.

And oh, how oft our loved one longed to go !
The hour is come, he's freed from sin and pain ;
Tho' o'er his clay the tears of nature flow,
Our loss, we feel, is his eternal gain.

Sudden the blow ! yet mercy doth appear ;
Reason we have for thankfulness most deep,
That he was spared long days of sickness here,
That he so gently, sweetly fell asleep.

Oh, what a blessed, glorious change ! To leave
His wearisome existence here below,
Th' eternal weight of glory to receive,
At God's right hand, where perfect pleasures flow.

In that bright home, his mind, so clouded here,
Undimmed, unfettered, doth with rapture rove
Thro' all the glories of the heavenly sphere,
Thro' all the heights and depths of Jesu's love.

The jewel's gone—the casket we must lay
Down in the earth, to mingle with the dust,
But it shall glorious rise, at that great day,
When Jesus comes again to raise the just.

O Lord, be Father to the fatherless ;
A tender Husband to the widow too :
Deign to be with us to protect and bless,
And be our Guide life's toilsome journey through.

To Thee, O gracious Lord, our prayer we raise,
That Thou would'st fit us with Thyself to dwell ;
To join our loved one in his song of praise
To Thy great name, who hast done all things well.

WITHIN THE VAIL.

FOUNDED ON A SERMON BY MR. WALE.

In bygone days of types and shadows dim,
What wondrous things within the vail were found !
The ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim—
The high-priest only passed its sacred bound ;

Once in the year he entered there alone,
With sprinkled blood, for Israel to atone.

These all were types of what is now complete ;
Christ, the High Priest, hath gone within the vail ;
God's eye is resting on the mercy-seat,
On law fulfilled, and blood that must prevail ;
No seeking mourning soul will be denied—
The vail was rent when Christ for sinners died.

Within the vail our future lies concealed :
But, Christian, think in each foreboding hour,
The times and seasons that are unrevealed,
Are placed in thine Almighty Father's power.
Whatever troubles to thy lot may fall,
Thy loving Father knows and rules them all.

Within the vail of Christ's humanity
The Godhead shone when here on earth He dwelt ;
Shone in His wondrous deeds, that all could see,
Shone in His words, whose power was deeply felt.
Poor mortals would have died if they had seen
The mighty God without a vail between.

Who are within the vail ? the loved, the lost ;
Dear saints of God who used with us to dwell ;
Jesus is there amidst the ransomed host,
His presence makes their joy unspeakable.
All earthly joys must quickly fade and fail,
Eternal pleasures are within the vail.

"HE KNOWETH OUR FRAME."

Psalm ciii. 14.

How sweetly doth the holy Psalmist speak
Of God's kind care towards those who fear His name ;
Oh, blessed Spirit, cause the tried and weak,
To muse upon the words, and feel the same ;
That as a father pities children dear,
God pities them, and will their groanings hear.

He knows our frame—the Saviour knows it well,
For He on earth our human nature wore ;
As Man of Sorrows who His griefs can tell ?
Hunger and thirst, fatigue, and pain He bore.
This nature now in glory He retains,
And sympathises in His members' pains.

He knows the frame of every child of His,
In love appoints the trials they must share ;
He knows their weight—believer, think of this—
He lays not on thee more than thou canst bear ;
God gives thee strength according to thy day ;
Yea, is Himself thy never-failing stay.

He knows your frame, ye suffering saints, who lie
For weary days and nights on beds of pain ;
He knows each ache and pain, hears every sigh,
And by His mighty power He will sustain ;
The everlasting arms are underneath,
And shall support you to your latest breath.

He knows our frame—He knows how many shrink
From death's cold flood with trembling and with fear ;
“ Fear not,” Jehovah saith, “ ye shall not sink,
When passing through the waters I'll be near,
And bring My people to the heavenly shore,
Where death, and pain, and sin, are known no more.”

He knows our frame, remembers we are dust :
To dust the bodies of the saints shall come ;
But Jesus knows them, and one day they must,
At His arousing summons, quit the tomb ;
Each ransomed body, in corruption sown,
Shall glorious rise to stand before the throne.

ON THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A FRIEND.

How suddenly the summons
To one beloved has come !
But, safe in Jesus, dying
To her was going home.
'Tis painful to survivors
That they should lose her so, .
But yet how much of mercy
Is mingled with the blow !
The aged, helpless husband
Had felt it even more,
If he had seen her lying
For weeks in sickness sore.
And her desire is granted,
That such her death might be—
How blessed ! in a moment
From earth and sin set free.

Caught from her humble dwelling
To Paradise above—
From pain, and care, and weakness
To heavenly light and love.
And there she's sweetly singing,
Before the throne of God,
The praises of the Saviour
Who washed her in His blood.

Cheer up, afflicted husband—
'Tis hard indeed to part
From thy beloved companion,
So dear unto thy heart.
May God thy Father help thee
To bow unto His will—
We know that He is faithful—
We know He loves thee still.

He'll be thy stay and portion,
Far more than wife or friend,
And give thee strength for bearing
Thy cross unto the end.
And then thy ransomed spirit
Shall quit its house of clay,
And rise to join thy loved one
In realms of endless day !

THE OLD DIVINE'S LITTLE BOOK.

FOUNDED ON A PASSAGE IN A SERMON BY MR. WILLIS.

An old divine possessed a book,
From which he would not part ;

Where'er he went he carried it,
Laid close against his heart.
Three pages only it contained,
And on them not a word;
The first page black, the second red,
And purely white the third.

Strangers remarked the little book,
So prized, and wondered why :
When asked its meaning and its use,
The good man would reply :—
“ I look upon this jet-black page,
Then turn my eyes within,
And see, by nature, I am black,
Defiled throughout with sin.

“ I view the crimson page, and muse
On blood for sinners spilt—
The precious blood from Jesus' veins,
That cleanses me from guilt.
The white page then remindeth me
I'm fair in Christ my love,
And hope in spotless purity
To dwell with Him above.”

O sweet and blessed Gospel truths !
Eternal Spirit, deign
To make them known within our hearts,
That we may comfort gain.

Black in the fall, O may we feel
The power of blood divine,
And in the Saviour's righteousness
For ever spotless shine !

“ WITHOUT FAULT BEFORE THE THRONE OF
GOD.”

Revelation xiv. 5.

In ourselves, and others too,
O how much of sin we view !
Often the believer sighs
For his home beyond the skies ;
Longs to leave this world of sin,
Disembodied, enter in,
Where the saints in bliss unknown,
Faultless dwell before the throne.

Once those happy ones were found,
Sinners on this earthly ground ;
In His blood on Calvary spilt,
Jesus washed them from their guilt :
Clothed them in the costly dress
Of His spotless righteousness :
By His Spirit sanctified,
Now in glory they abide.

Jesus' Church, while here below,
Is complete in Him, we know ;
Thus He speaks unto His dove—
“ Thou art wholly fair, my love.”

But though comely in her Lord,
Sin dwells in her, most abhorred ;
" In myself," she cries, with shame,
" Black as Kedar's tents I am."

Here believers mourn through sin,
Feeling constant war within ;
Soon the flesh that makes them groan,
Shall be in corruption sown ;
Sleep awhile in earth's dark breast,
Hence to rise in glory drest,
With the soul be ever one,
Faultless, both before the throne.

Many whom we loved so well,
In that land of glory dwell ;
Ah, we cannot wish them back,
But would follow in their track.
Jesus, Lord, our spirits bless—
Let Thy blood and righteousness
Be on earth our mighty plea,
Fitting us to live with thee !

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG FRIEND.

Yes, she is dead ! gone from the loving clasp
Of tender hands that would have held her here ;
As low she lies in death's relentless grasp,
Over her early grave falls many a tear.
And we may weep, for Jesus, when below,
Wept at the grave of Lazarus, His friend,

And He can sympathize with those, we know,
Who o'er the dead in heartfelt sorrow bend.

Thanks be to God, we grieve not in this case,
As those who have no hope beyond the grave,
For the departed one was led to place
Her only trust in Him who died to save.
Surely her faith, though tried, and weak, and dim,
Was Spirit-wrought—it led to Jesus' blood;
Feeling no help in self, she looked to Him,
So we believe her spirit is with God.

With Him in perfect, everlasting joy ;
No sin nor sorrow, pain nor crosses there ;
Uninterrupted bliss, without alloy,
She doth with all the church triumphant share.
And at the glorious resurrection hour,
Her body shall rejoin her soul above—
Now sown in weakness, it shall rise in power,
To see the Saviour, and to sing His love.

Lord, look upon the kindred left behind,
And graciously be pleased to bring them near
Unto Thyself, that they may comfort find—
Oh soothe their hearts, and wipe away each tear.
In the sore trial grant them inward strength
To bear it, Lord : give resignation sweet ;
And in Thy sovereign will, may *all* at length
In Thy bright home above, their loved one meet.

Within a few short months how many young
From our own circle have been snatched by death !
The solemn question trembles on the tongue—
Are *we* prepared if called to yield our breath ?
If here our interest in Christ we see,
And if our hearts with grace the Spirit fills,
How blest our state—for we shall ready be
To live or die, just as our Father wills !

Finis.

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